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The Revd. Wm. Scott.
with the Authors kind regards.

CERACCHI,

A DRAMA,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

Samuel Naylor

—— si quid vacui sub umbra
Lusimus tecum, quod et hunc in annum
Vivat, et plures.

Hor.

[NOT PUBLISHED.]

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TO

MY DEAR FRIEND,

THE REVEREND WILLIAM J. IRONS, M. A.

OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD,

RECTOR OF REED, AND VICAR OF BARKWAY,

IN THE COUNTY OF HERTS,

THIS LITTLE MEMORIAL

OF OLDEN TIMES,

IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

S. NAYLOR.

PREFACE.

To the few for whom more especially these pages are printed, their contents will not be altogether unfamiliar. Years have now elapsed since they were first compiled, and the best apology for their present appearance, may perhaps be found in the favorable acceptation of some of the shorter pieces, as the opportunities offered for their publication.

The more immediate incentive to their re-production here, will scarcely be deemed worthy the explanation.

The first of the following compositions, for which it has been presumed to claim the title of a Drama, was designed as an impersonation of the misdirected energies of a noble nature, erring in its departure from habitual contemplation of the exalted ideal of Art, into the vain pursuit after its semblance in Man. The story of CERACCHI, belongs to the domestic history of the period. Its perusal in the lively "*Memoires d'une femme de qualité*" at once suggested its dramatic capabilities. The scenic narrative of those memoirs has been closely followed, excepting only in the developement

of the conspiracy, and which it has been ventured to alter for the purposes appearing. To anticipate the objection of adorning crime by enduing the criminal in the countervailing graces of a genius unborrowed of any art, would be here out of place. Whether, indeed, the Demon of assassination be better entitled to assume the robe of a Brutus, or the rags of a Ravailliac, is but a questionable topic for prefatory discussion.

The Passages translated from Faust, lay claim to no merit beyond that of being as true and literal a rendering of the original parts, as the cognate genius of our own language would naturally suggest; a characteristic of which the several authors of the many English versions of the Poem,

have uniformly declined to avail themselves. Although mere verbal accuracy be, of itself, no sufficient test of the merit of a translation, it is not the less certain that, without its cardinal observance, the spirit of the original will in vain seek for a congenial exponent in another tongue.

The Translations, for the most part, were undertaken by way of experiment, during a residence at Weimar,—a name fragrant with pleasurable recollections to all Englishmen who have had the happiness to sojourn there, and ever to be honored and cherished by One, for the many lasting recollections associated with that, to him, endeared home.—Not the least portion of their value, in the writer's estimation, is derived from a grateful remembrance of the many kindly offices

he was privileged to experience throughout their progress at the hands of that most amiable and highly gifted lady, Madame de Goethe, the varied and excellent qualities of whose nobly endowed nature, were, as is well known to all who know her, never more cheerfully exercised than in the promotion of ends conducive to the happiness of others.

For the Miscellaneous portion of the volume, there will need, it is hoped, no further introduction, than, that like the first, though inscribed by the pen of early youth, the leisure hand of riper years has not disdained the invitation to affix its "imprimatur."

Maidenhead, January, 1839.

Lady! it is a wan hand wakes to thee,
On a dilapidated lyre—yet how
Dearly once loved, the language now must be
Mute as dumb echos to lost voices, know
Is never one, save who, with angel brow,
Content, hath sat the silent hour, could move
Remembrance from its lethargy to flow
Once more the mantled streamlet of young love,
Or lure the languid lid once more to look above.
Then take the Offering—offering if that be,
Which Time, the trespasser, hath stol'n from thee.

January, 1839.

CERACCHI.

CHARACTERS.

Napoleon Buonaparte, First Consul of France.

David, Painter to the Court.

Topino Le Brun, a young Artist.

Ceracchi, a Sculptor of Rome, domiciled in France.

Leonora, his Daughter.

The Scene throughout lies in Paris.

CERACCHI.

SCENE.—*The Studio of* CERACCHI.

CERACCHI *and* LE BRUN.

Cer. Proceed, but, with the Truth.

Le B. Since first we met
Thou hast not quarrelled with th' acquaintanceship,
But suffered aye that interchange of thought,
Where giving and receipt did make at once
The motive and continuance of our love,
Ripen to friendship, for the which I am
Much, much thy debtor; since to thee I owe
Whate'er I find in me perfectible,
Howbeit small. Thus learn'd I to regard thee,

As a superior nature; one to be
Sought for the worth was in thee, and retained
At no expense too great—so thinking, judge
Of the esteem I held thy sayings in,
Thy doubts, and thine opinions, which were golden;
How shunned the risk of being spurned by thee,
How sought the chance of being loved; for thou
Stern Censor wert to my infirmities,
Step-father to my faults—I thank thee for it.
Was not one secret in my heart, Ceracchi,
But was thine own as well: This ever so,
Nor, on the other hand, did spring a truth
Within thy bosom, but its prizer found
In me, thy confidant.

Cer. 'Twas as it should be.

Le B. But suddenly thy manner grew estranged,
And wore a most unnatural diffidence:
Thy talk was Liberty—

Cer. Thine, not!

Le B. And I,
No longer worthy of thy love, was thrust
Off as some monitor thou seem'dst to fear,
Or 'complice grown too dangerous to trust.

Cer. I thought thee subtle, from some things thou saidst.

Le B. Repeat them—

Cer. Words; but for th' impression worthless;

Indeed, I scored them not.

Le. B. Why then mistrust me?

Cer. Go to, thou fanciedst so.

Le B. See, now, suspicion,
The reptile that doth love the dark, protrude
Its feelers from thine eyeballs! Even now
Thou marvelest how I have discovered thee,
And, like the spider tracked by his own thread,
All in a corner cower'st, struck a heap!

Cer. *(With exalted voice)*
Who told thee, man, Ceracchi knew abasement?
Imagination? Scourge the liar out!
Who told thee that Ceracchi knew abasement?
Craft, say ye? Kill her with a wiser cunning!
False deeming's the most damnable deceit;
It cozens him who cheats, and him who's cheated.
If thy quick intuition was assumed
The better to beguile me to thy gaze—
Which I believe it was—then, I lament
Thine art should lord it o'er thy nature so,
And poor Fool pity for his folly's sake.

Le B. Come, come, no more—hast thou forgotten how
We have pursued the Atalante chase
Of Liberty, but to enrich us with
The gilded baits she dropped for our decoy?
Hast thou forgotten how thou penetrated'st

My very liver with the nightly tale
Of hopes and prospects blighted—fond, fond hopes,
Fair prospects, which thy mind did dwell upon
As they alone were fit to enter there?
When thou relatedst what a dream was thine,
The dream of Liberty, on whose fulfilment
Thine happiness, thy life was staked, and thou
All in the energy of thy great soul,
Sware million deaths did cheaply purchase her?
Nor didst thou labour in thy thought alone,
But bent thy body to the work, and proved
Thy precepts in performance—and was I
Not hand in hand with thee the while, imbibing
From thy companionship, the self same spirit
Did animate thyself?—Ceracchi, hear me!
Not greater grief did swell thy bursting heart
Than mine, when by th'ambition of one man,
Each glorious good thou meditatedst, died.
I, too, I wept, I mourned the evil fate
That brought our brightening prospects to a close.—
I marked the Corsican's career, and pierced
The very marrow of his inmost thoughts
Before himself durst trust his treacherous soul
With knowledge of its own fell purposes.—
Why start ye?

Cer. At the counterpart—well—well?

Le B. Like thee, I ponder'd, and like thee, I dream'd
Night, day, of the Destroyer, 'till his image
Rose up a vampyre to my thoughts that suck'd
Their virgin blood away.—His hateful form
Clung, moss-like, to my memory, and choked
Its very vitals up—him saw I stretched
Upon the down bed of the Bourbon King,
Mocking its martyr'd monarch,—him beheld I
Hung'ring for th' ermine, plucking at the crown,
And, in the dreaminess of his dread eye,
Aping the state of royalty.—
Nor less
I marked the wan intelligence that beam'd
Forth from thine aspect, as thou dangled'st in
His train, concealing some high purpose in thee,
Only 'till fitting season should be found
For its developement. I longed to be
Part owner in that venture: day by day,
Pluming my spirit to th'endeavour: for,
I knew thee for a Brutus; knowing which,
I feared not first to strike the Casca-blow,
With such a blade as thine to second it.
To-night I would have done it, as he stood
Amid his courtiers in the Tuilleries,
His myrmidons about him, but I mark'd
Thine eye, as it did scan him, and thy front,

Which stood like a Messiahs', and I felt
Remorse at robbery of what did seem
The guerdon that of right belonged to thee.

Cer. Young man, how bloody is the mind of thee!
This is some feverish dream, go, sleep upon it:
And wake the morrow morn a wiser man!

Le B. (*draws a dagger from beneath his cloak.*)
Do men wear daggers in their dreams?

Cer. Tut—Tut!
Back to thine easel, painter!

Le B. 'Tis a rack,
On which my thoughts lie tortured.

Cer. Take thy brushes—

Le B. Daggers within my grasp! and every touch
A stab upon the canvass. Talk no more on't!

(*Le Brun points to the dagger, and whispers Ceracchi.*)

Cer. (*Half aloud.*)
Nay, nay!—When I am with him for his bust?
To-morrow morn at noon he sits to me
For the last time but one—

Le B. (*Eagerly.*)
Then!

Cer. How—without
One word of warning, or of mild entreaty?

Le B. 'Tis useless—he will foil us—strike at once!

Cer. He was my friend.

Le B. The better the less tampered.

Cer. Yes. I will speak to him :

Le B. (*Scornfully.*)

And bid him 'ware—

Cer. For he did love me, once.

Le B. So would he now,

Did he not fear thee, and, so, hate. I tell thee

It is 'twixt him and thee as 'twixt sworn foes,

First blow, first blood !

Cer. That's true—true—true !

Le B. And give him

Another day, he's spider and thou fly !

Cer. Yet I will speak to him.

Lc B. It will be treason

Unto his ear : thy life he'll have for it.

Cer. It will be honorable to speak him first.

Le B. All honor suits not with expediency.

Cer. Farewell—I'll think on it.

Le B. Nay, promise !—Now !

Cer. Well ; let it be so—fare thee well ! yet stay—

Are we alone in this—this high emprise ?

Le B. There are three others well aware of him :

The Corsican Diana, Joseph Arena,

And Damerville, the General of Brigade.

They three have dogged him for days past, but ever

Foul'd on his track, he's grown so circumspect ;

Thou know'st the men?

Cer. The men I know, in common,
As good men, true and valiant—for aught else
I never scanned their qualities—They should
Be Romans who would lift an arm in this—
No matter! Yet I would 'twere ours alone.

Le B. (*retires.*)

Cer. Ay! and by Heaven! I'll do it; I, alone!

SCENE.—*An apartment in the Tuilleries. Ceracchi is discovered at work on an unfinished bust of the First Consul. The door opens and Buonaparte enters.*

Buon. It was my purpose to surprise ye thus,
That we might sit uninterruptedly
An hour in talk, before the attendants knew
I kept th' appointment in thy Studio.
Cer. Thou feelest, too, the joy of privacy,
Watched ever as thou art by—
Buon. *(Starts.)*
Watched! who watches?
Cer. The world—which is observant of the man
Round whom the vortices of faction whirl.
Buon. Writhe, rather say, like snakes set round about
My ears, to hiss and splutter forth their venom!
Would God they'd but one head!
Cer. A Nero's thought!
Buon. Thy self-sufficient jeer!
Cer. Suits it thy humour
So to regard it, well.

(*The first Consul takes his Seat; and Ceracchi disposes himself to work at the Bust.*)

Cer. More to the light
I prithee—so.

Buon. Thou deem'st me, then, a Nero?
And yet am I no Emperor.

Cer. In name—
And why not that, if so ye be in heart?
Why frown ye?

Buon. To thy work; my time is short.

Cer. Work can I, and converse the while: There is
A capability of mind in Art,
Enabling thought's divarication from
The immediate object of its visible theme—
Prompting the seeking Spirit of the man
To higher intercourse elsewhere.—Besides,
Methought to talk with me thou cam'st?

Buon. To talk
With thee I came, the whiles thou wert at work;
Not sit and listen to thy lunging tongue,
And be thy butt of talk, my friend, believe ye.

Cer. (*With loud violence.*)
Would'st have me pay thee court in private? Nay!
Nay, by th' Apollo of great Pihdias!

Buon. Pish!

Cer. Are we not man to man, as in the days
Of ancient fellowship? No eye upon us,
Save the great eye of Heaven— the rolling orb
Which all th' expanse beneath its opening lid
Fills with effulgence?—

Buon. Kind and courteous, ever,
As thou wert wont, I'd have thee; but not thus.
A fierce flame lurketh in thy brooding brow,
Which I nor like, nor choose to look upon.
I knew thee for another once.

Cer. Another
Hope once athwart my credulous heart did throw
The silver shadow of her westring wing;
Strewing, with flowrets fresh from morning's lap,
Life's green and pleasant springtide—beckoning forth
The latent love that languished in my soul—
Bidding my footsteps 'tend the path thou trod'st:—
But lo! it was a vapour! In the glare
Of the broad noon, that mad imagining,
That vain delusion dissipated, died!

Buon. (*restless.*)
Why this to me?

Cer. (*casting away his chisel, and advancing with agitation towards Buonaparte.*)
To thee?—Thou wert that hope!

I marked thee by the might of thine own mind
Leading the living soul of the wide world,
E'en as a little child an elephant
Linked to its swayful will by a small cord.
I marked thee in the sunrise of thy soar,
Topping the clouds for pastime; which to thee
Did seem but as the places where to rest
Thy foot-soles in their swift aeriel flight
Into some land of loveliness and joy.
From Austria's capture to the welcome peace
Of Campo Formio went scarce one day
But each in th' other's dear companionship
'Twixt sun and sun held converse: I from thee
Drawing the breath of pure philanthropy,
And thou, as from this altar of thine hands,
Inhaling the sweet incense o'er again.
I marked thee in, and followed thro', the plains
Of Italy, whose balmy sky first bathed
My infant limbs in its bright flood of day:
Helped thee with hand and heart-strings to upturn
The bondage of my fellow-countrymen:
Saw thee, a second Hannibal, cut through
The adamantine girdle of my home;
Straight cleave thy passage to the Pontiff's chair,
And wave thine eagles o'er his wildered gaze.

Oh! what a drunken moment of delight!
When kinsmen, country, friends, all, put away
To serve the cause of France, and of the world,
Of liberty, of life, of Buonaparte!

Buon. What raving madman art thou grown!

Cer. Thou didst not
Think so upon a time.

Buon. Then must thou have
Most cunningly, (which fathers the suspicion)
Contrived thy true unvarnished character
To mask, or feign the one thou had'st not.

Cer. Neither,
As well thou knowest. Doth thy memory
Yet mindful hold of former prophecy?

Buon. The knave's prescription for the fool's complaint!

Cer. That which I speak of us alone concerns.

Buon. Of what would'st speak?

Cer. At Milan was it, where,
Thine eagles having swooped o'er Italy,
Thou and the victor host at thy command
Did enter for a season. As thou stood'st
One day within th' embattled ranks, I made
My way through the opposing bayonets
That did surround thy person, breathless with
Fevering hope of friendship long estranged,

To clasp thine hand, and, with the tears of joy,
Bedew its surface, when, (unkindly done!)
Leisurely eyeing me, thou turn'd'st, and said,
'Twas difficult to trace in memory's map
The vestige of the friend of early years,
Surrounded as thou wert with features new
And voices made familiar to thine ear.
But when my name thou heard'st, and my tongue groaned
Something about unkind forgetfulness,
And the loose-strung affection time could warp—
At the rebuke thou paled'st, and replied,
'I do remember we were friends, but we
Have seen long separation, and the herd
About me, are from interest my *friends*,
And they have made me think mankind are such
As they themselves; so many knees bend low
To my prosperity, I fain must think
All men are made for crouching, and despise them.'
Whereat I answered thee most memorably;
Ha! Is it come to this? Despisest thou
The world? Then, Corsican, thou'lt domineer it!
Did I speak true or false?

Buon. False, false!

Cer. Thy proof?

Buon. Around thee, wheresoe'er thou wilt, may'st look,

Thou'lt find I do not domineer, but rule.—

Cer. With iron sway, where the last Bourbon, whom
Thou dost usurp, before thee governed
With silver sceptre as compared with thine.

Buon. Which was the reason why it snapped! Men are not
What thou dost take them for, and I would have them.

Cer. Else would their doom be other than it is.

Buon. I understand your sneer, and know to spurn it.
Ceracchi, thou art envious!

Cer. No: by the living Spirit of the Godhead!
Which quick'neth at this hour my purest thought,
I would not envy power in mortal man,
Were it Titanian in its might, and ample
To give the greatest glory of the earth
To the possesser on't—save that which served
The ministry of peace to the whole world,
And in its compass counted every good,
Its blessings lavished equally on all.

Buon. (*striding rapidly across the chamber, and darting fierce looks at Ceracchi.*)
Tattle for nurseries! have done with it!
Look up, and be a man! with years grow wise!
I'd rather rot, than live so long, and learn
So little of experience!—Dreams—all dreams!

Cer. (*with calm yet earnest dignity advancing towards Buonaparte, and affectionately seizing his hand.*)

Oh! if the manner of beseechment may
Aught from its outward fashioning derive
Wherewith to gild persuasion, let it serve
That I, on knee till now unknown to bend,— (*kneels.*)
Save at the altar of my God,—do here,
By the dumb eloquence of mien, lift up
The prayer which words can speak not—and do thou
The all-articulate supplication feign,
Which, wert thou the Omnipotent, and held
The forked spear of fate, would penetrate
Thy secret chord, and make thee poise awhile
The rivening bolt uplifted to destroy:
For such a stream of words I'd use with thee
As should persuade persuasion—
Ah! dost turn
Thine ear away!

(*Ceracchi's hand steals over the dagger concealed in his breast.*)

For Christ's sake? turn again
That I may *feel* thine eye on me!

Buon. (*Disengaging his hand from Ceracchi's frantic grasp*)

Madman! I mark the demon in thy scowl.

(*Ceracchi alone.*)

Cer.—Gone! on his lip the cold and callous sneer,
Constraining the observer to conclude
The inward part of him untuneable
To any impulse save the goading spur
Of his o'erleaping aim!—
Had I but done it
When I was down before him, on my knees,
Suing in vain to his obduracy,—
What more had been the deed than serviceable,
As adding one number to the up-piled heap
Of mouldering tyrants?—Had I killed him so,
How would th' approving conscience on the morrow
Have justified, as now it shall, the blow?
And now, more nerved I feel to undertake
This awful purpose: every sinew sets
Stiller, and steadier than before, and mind
Made up to the grand effort, seems to poise
Her pinion, now no longer fluttering,
As some far journeying bird in sight of her
Long sought, long cherished, long estranged rest.
Oh blessed rest! Oh silver sound of peace!
Could the pure honey of that one sweet word
Drop in and mingle with the cup of blood
Whereon these gloating eye-balls are distent
Through the long waking night of life! And ye!
O ye base caitiff wretches, whom the deed

Of death allures with sordid appetite,
Or the fell whisperings of some passionate pang
By wrath, revenge, or enmity enkindled—
Born of, and nurtured in the world of self !—
What must ye feel in the re-visitings
Of night and solitude, whose sable mantles
Shew white against the dark pall o'er your hearts,
Themselves more black than it !—when I, impelled
On the commission of a kindred sin,
For ends that have no rooting in my will,
Nor draw their life from aught that lives in me,
The wavering agent,—yet am so dismayed
At the bare shadow of my desperate doing,
These hands were readier far to sack and storm
Life's citadel within mine own clay walls
Than spring the covert mine beneath another's—
But for the awful voice that speaks within me !

(*David enters.*)

Dav. Pardon, mine honor'd master, the intrusion !

Cer. The welcome friend did never yet intrude.

Dav. The Consul's willing messenger am I,
Of his munificence and love. You start,—
As well you may, for it is something rare,
Confessedly, from an offended humour
To pluck advantage.

Cer. Pray you, Sir, relate
Without the axiom

Dav. 'Twas but now I sat
At work in the great window of my studio
Within the palace, on the last large painting
Commissioned by the Consul for the Pope;
When suddenly in came he, looking fire
From's eyes, as is his wont when chafed, and said,
"David! Ceracchi hath addressed me in
Language unfitting my relationship
To France; he's envious: go thou to him straight
And say, I have a lynx eye that can pierce
The marrow through the bone, and have detected
The devil in him working for his ends!
Bid him from me unalterable friendship,
And such regard as he who beareth sway
In a great empire can bestow: but mark me!
If that he would continue this condition
'Twixt him and me, then let him look he step not
Beyond the point at which endurance halts:
Else shall contempt come treading out the marks
Of warm esteem, all from th' obtrusion of
Familiarity where none is asked—
Thou art an artist: so is he: no fitter
Person than thou to do this—go!—" Then added
In tone subdued, as if the flame went out
In that one gush of words,—"If his sole bent
Be eminence, and I have power to help
Him to that end, (which if one man on earth

More than another can, I am that one)
Tell him my fortune at his service stands,
And that I will go leagues to seek him out
The thing he sets his soul on—but, I brook not
In my affairs his idle interference:
Precedency in art, or branch of art,
Waits but a nod to signify his wish,
And the high patent's granted:—Tell him thus."—
This said, abrupt and quick was his departure.
So, seest thou, citizen, the ladder placed
By the Frst Consul's hand—do thou up-climb,
And mount to where thou mark'st the crowning point.

Cer. You speak like a true courtier, silver-tongued:
Yet do your words weigh not with me: I have
No stomach for monopoly of merit:
Had rather from men's inward thoughts exact
My patent of precedency, than owe
To favour, like a doled alms bestowed,
The meed I would demand from them by right.

Dav. Sure thou'lt not spurn the Consul's courtesy—
His kindness —?

Cer. Is it meant in kindness, think ye?

Dav. How else?

Cer. I do not so regard it, soothly.
When once a friend so far forgets his friendship
As to confound all recollection of
The man he knew for noble in his nature,

Make proffer of his patronage to one
Who helped him to the opportunity
Of so dispensing it among the herd
That lick his hand for what they get by it:
Call you that friendship? courtesy, i' faith!
I hate the practice on't; I'll none of it!

Dav. Patience, and I before ye straight will set
The proposition in its natural light;
Which seems to thy disturbed faculty
So strange a medium. Wherefore, know I not,
This change, since once I well remember thee
Of taste, discretion, and all rarer virtues,
Consummate master—but enough, 'tis changed.

Cer. Thou say'st—enough, 'tis changed—enough!

Dav. Yet why
Thou should'st so far have disapprenticed thee
Of thy discipleship to art, so much
Have laboured to despise the thing thou loved'st,
As thus refuse its crown of eminence
By merit won, and proffered by acclaim,
Thorough the symbol of the people's choice,
Surpasses my conjecture.

Can'st recall
The many a discourse sweet and talk prolong'd
Deep in the waning night, what time we sat,
Thou and thy gentle daughter, and myself,
Upon the terrace hanging o'er the lake

Before thy studio?—

Cer. (*with deep emotion*) There was yet another!—
Now sitting with the Saints in their bright glory.—
Ah me! too well can I recall those times!

Dav. How pictured'st thou to my then youthful soul,
In colours such as none like thee could tint,
The glory of that greatness which was set
Before the son of art as for his goal—
The peaceful glory fitting the solitude
Of patient hours of struggling and abstraction
Apart unto the full developement
Of the Divinity within, devoted!
Thus wontest thou to chain my thirsty ears,
And with the like enticements magnify
Before my sanguine soul the high estate
Of the condition high she might attain—
Not that thyself had reached it, and that thus
Thou, in the recapitulation, wert
Feeding vain-glorious fantasy—for thou
Ever beyond the many's comprehension
Soared'st, amid the ether blue of thought,
And fancy, subtilized above the scope
Of all who stood not next thee.—

Cer. (*impatiently*) Boy, no more!
I taught thee not t' approve thy master's merits
Before his face—Go to, thou'lt anger me!
Let us no more of this.

Behold, my daughter
Hither is come to seek us—Leonora!

(*Leonora enters.*)

Cer. My child, my best beloved! what bringeth thee
Within the palace?

Leon. (*delivering to him a sealed packet*) To deliver this;
Which I did promise with my lips, to place
With mine own hands in thine; for it concerned,
So did the bearer say, thee much to read it
Without delay.

Cer. (*Opens the packet, and reads aside*)
To-night! and at the play!
(*aloud*)
I thank thee, child, for this thy filial love.

Dav. Nothing, I hope, unpleasant—

Cer. Nothing, nothing!
To change the hour of an appointment, only;
Which I shall well enough remember.—Now
Must I away from hence: And ye, my children,
Make one another's company suffice,
And so farewell till sun-down! (*Exit Ceracchi.*)

Leon. (*who has with difficulty restrained her emotion, bursting out*)
David, thou lov'st me—truly?

Dav. As my life!

Leon. Life! Dost thou love me to the death? say that!

Dav. Without thee, Leonora, welcome death!

Or life were but a living sepulchre,
Deep chiselled by the graver memory,
With one vast epitaph of joys all—all
With thee departed!

Leon. Out, alas! his passion
Doth him, of all men, make the most unfit
For sudden counsel in this pressing straight!

Dav. If there be wanting aught —?

Leon. All, David, all!
Thy constancy, what is it more than mine?
Thy firm adherence to my father's fortunes
Throughout the period when he stood alone,
Unaided but by thee, against the legion
Of the fierce terrorists, and braved to scorn
The fury of a Danton, was a thing
Which thou for friendship didst elect to do,
And admiration of my father's virtues,
Not for my love, which now unto the test
Thine would subject, to prove if it be made,
Of metal firm enough to forge with mine!

Dav. Thy speech, thy tone, thy manner all are strange!
Yet, if this be but —, as I hope it is—
The wayward impulse of some sudden thought
Engendered of the passing moment only—
Light duty, and by quick performance paid,—
I beg of thee to change it for some other,
Some graver 'hest, which I, by prompt fulfilment,

Will on the instant satisfy;

Leon. Oh David!

Forget I am the thing I am—or, rather,
Remember I no longer am that thing—
A silly heedless maiden who did joy
Boccacio's pages with her Love to con,
As light of heart as they of whom the tales
Are therein told; as prone to freaks and jests,
As e'en the maddest there.—Alas! no jeer
Sits on my tongue, or lurks within my heart,
Tho' by your looks you seem to say so—Hush!
What sound?—Are we secure from listeners?

Dav. These are the Consul's private chambers; none
Have access here without his special license.
But why this secresy? thy look, thy features
Betray an agony of grief within
Thine heaving bosom: I implore thee, speak
My Leonore, mine own betrothed.

Leon. I will,
On one condition.

Dav. Name it.

Leon. That thou promise
To seek me never more until the charge
I now deliver thee be out of hand,
And done as I shall dictate!

Dav. (*kneeling*) I do swear,
Upon my bended knees, I'll so perform it
In sight of the Great God, in whose high name
I here do warrant for the deed!

Leon. Amen!
Thou must upon this mission high
With sudden speed be gone.—Thy love, my life,
My father's—all, depend upon thine haste.

Dav. Maiden! what means this?

Leon. Listen! and obey!
Thou hast the Consul's ear—go to him straight,
And tell him that Ceracchi—yes, my father—
The father that begat me—seeks his life!

Dav. (Forbid it, gracious Heaven!)

Leon —That ere night wanes
One hour, he must be seized! Remember
Thine oath!

Dav. Deluded girl! thy father's life
Thou'd'st take, and for the dagger use my tongue!
I'll pluck it by the roots first!

Leon. That thou may'st,
When it hath done my bidding, and thine oath.
Quick! to the Consul!

Dav. Gracious Powers! I dream!

Leon. Away, away! blood hangs upon each moment.

Dav. Alas, she's mad!—What proof hast thou of this?

Leon. That care be mine.

Dav. Woman! I can not—can not!

Leon. Then fare thee well for ever, perjurer!
If thou, for love, lack'st courage, and dost will
To be not able when a child entreats
For her lost father, get thee gone, poor wretch!
See what a woman, and a weak one, can!
Time brooks not here delay. (*rushes out*)

Dav. What do I dream?
Where am I?—What hath passed? Oh she is mad!
Ceracchi?—he, the god-like, an assassin?
And by his child denounced? his own heart's blood?
It must not, shall not be, away, away!

SCENE.—*Leonora's Chamber.—She is reclining on a couch: her looks emaciated and wan. David enters softly and approaches her.*

Leon. Whose step is that, which with such noiseless tread
Doth, like a mourners sad sepulchral pace,
Burthen the heavy silence?

Dav. Leonora!

Leon. (*raises herself up, fixing her disdainful eye upon him*)
Coward forsworn! this is thy work—behold!

Dav. Lady, thou dost accuse me wrongfully:
Not my work, but thine own.—

Leon. Thou sayest—
Mine only is the deed, which thou compelledst
By thine unmanly hesitation. Go!

Dav. Alas! thou dost me most unmeasur'd wrong,
Yet will I bear it patiently. Not now
The time for exculpation, whilst thy father
Lies pining in the cells' unwholesome air.

Leon. I ask thee not to aggravate my woes:

Let the big dangers yawning round suffice,
Without thy help t' increase them.

Dav. Lady, alas!
Embittered is thy spirit with the gall
Of deep despair. Believe me, fain would I,
The once beloved—now scorned, yet innocent—man,
In these dark moments of emergency
The fleeting time for fleetest acts employ,
And, with my counsel cheer thy courage on,
If not by challenge fire it.

Leon. Thus it is—
A daughter, 'gainst her will, doth jeopardy
Her father's life for a brief space, to save
That father from the scaffold, and, thine aid,
Refused when erst 'twas lovingly implored,
Is now of none avail to save or help him.

Dav. Oh Leonora! had'st but used more art
And less of native impulse, I had been,
As now I fear I can not, thine armed friend,
And stood for thy dear sake, the self-impeached.

Leon. (*with emphasis*)
Remember, Sir, I am Ceracchi's daughter!
I have begun, I can go thro' with this.

Dav.! Alone! God help thee, maiden!

(*repulsed by her haughtiness, is about to depart, but returns, and imploringly asks*)

Is there aught
Wherein I may, by life or limb befriend thee?

Leon. What canst thou do? thy father is he not,

Dav. Oh yes, my more than father was Ceracchi.
No parent was the sire to whom I owed
My birth, compared to him beneath whose eye
I upward grew: whose presence hover'd round me,
Like some sweet bird of calm along the waste
Of the world's wilderness—the dreary sea
Of bickering thoughts, dark clouds, and buffetings
Which the young venturer baffle.—This thou knowest:
For was it not with thee, loved Leonora,
The trolling noontide tripping to the night,
In dance fantastic all the merry months
Of an Italian year, that, hand in hand,
We wont to gild the sunny hours of youth,
Gladdening with mirth the parent's doating eye
Which knew no joyance save in either's sight?

Leon. Oh happy, happy days!—for ever fleeted!

Dav. Oh say not, think not thus—when, that thy father
From out this present travail is delivered,
May we not thither tend our glad return,
Thou, and thy parent, and thy former friend
(Perchance—if but the heavens smile graciously—
The future partner of thy world of love!)
Implant our settled seat in some alcove

With art and the Old Empire eloquent,
High o'er the ravings of the rabble herd
There to reign sovereign, our hearts infixed,
All in a universe by us created,
Of happiness, and innocence, and love?

Leon. This from thee, David?—Were they lies they told
Of the great change in thee since thou had'st been
Among the Consul's friends enrolled, and one
About his dazzling chariot-wheels display'd,
Choicest of chosen ones?—
Yet could they not be—
Or why thy well known touch upon the wicket
(The little wicket opening on the lawn)
So long unheard by these aye-listening ears
Each evening, as the streaky twilight came?—
The converse sweet, or melody, or stroll
Leisurely hastened by the warning gust
Of the advancing night amid the leaves,
Breezing th' acacia in the garden hedge—
So long suspended, these, so long delayed?—

Dav. Truth told they, Leonora, when they said
The Consul soaring in his eagle-flight,
My gazing eye-balls dazzled—true, my soul,
With admiration only not content,
Sighed to participate and follow. This,

Tho' leages asunder, did his eye observe,
His condescension, and his grace approve ;
The invitation came, his hand I kissèd—
The Conqueror of Europe's lion hand !
We were that moment, and have since been, friends.
All this thy father saw and hated ; for
The reasons which thy sad discovery
Hath made all known to thee—this was it, too,
For which no more he welcom'd me to come
And listen, as of yore, to his full tones
On themes of art that loved to descant sweet,
Or wile away the swallow-winged hours
O'er the rapt echos of thy ravishing lyre,
Warbling its night song with the bird of night
In chords that lured the eve-stars from their homes
Midway to meet the madrigal, and die—

Leon. (*hiding her face in his bosom*)
Mine own ! my lost—but still mine own !

Dav. Beloved !
Need I to tell thee of the passionate grief
Which swept away all peace, all harmonies,
Save that remembrance of the past through thee
Made sweetly, though too sadly welcome ? How
I did assail thy father with entreaty
To look into my soul, and there behold

If any change had made me the less worthy
Of his high friendship, and parental love—
In vain!—such his unconquerable hate
Of the First Consul, whom he termed my *friend.*
But I do tire thee.—Thy bent look proclaims
That other thoughts live in thee.—

Leon. Oh my father!
My dear, dear father! wilt thou pardon me
For having thus betray'd thee to the man
Whose death thou deem'd'st high enterprize enough
For thine achieving hand to compass it!

Dav. That will he, for thy heroism's sake:
Besides, unto his daughter will he owe
His life, made precious by her love.—

Leon. Oh, David!
My mind misgives me for the end of this.
What if the people should oppose his pardon?
Demand his death? or, in their mercy, grant
Him worse than death—a living grave—the dungeon?

Dav. Fear'st thou the Consul will not keep his promise,
That he alone would save him?

Leon. I believe it,
As I believed his sole almighty arm
Sufficient to redeem the pledge he gave;
But, the fierce tumult of first terror past,

Sad thoughts, misgivings, and disheart'nings have
To th' onset of the impulse follow'd fast,
And dismal are the doubts I entertain
That he alone can save not—'tis with him
As with a gallant ship upon the waves
Steering her course right onward ; which to do,
Tack with the contradictory rude gale
She must, not steer it right a-head to port :
So, if the people do demand his death
With their obstreperous voices, must not he
Swim with the current which he dare not stem ?—
Shuddering, I think on what I've done !

Dav. Hope only !

Let me entreat thee, Leonora !—Come
Into the fresh'ning breeze—thou dost forget
In me thy father hath a friend will die
A willing sacrifice for him—for thee :
Thou dost forget my sway with Buonaparte,
Which can determine him to stand between
Thy father and the world against his safety,
Should it arise to fright him from his bent,
Which, if my knowledge of the man aught valueth,
With giant's might will strive to keep his word.

Come, love! thy fancy hath o'ermaster'd thee.
Come, 'tis a lovely night, and all things rest.—

Leon. Save the lone prisoner in his cell.—Oh David!

(*She bursts into tears, and leans, overpowered, for support on David, who gently leads her towards the balcony.*)

Scene.—*A Cell. Ceracchi is sitting in deep meditation; an opened letter in his hand, in which he looks from time to time.*

Cer. Forgive thee? Yes! forgiveness shalt thou have
E'en as thou ask'st it,—" to the uttermost."
Oh no! I am not wrath with thee, my child.
Thou say'st (and I believe thee) " 'twas thine anchor—
The one strong anchor of thine only hope,
That with thy woman's fervour, thou let'st go
To save thy father's life"—which it will wreck!
(*He takes up the letter and reads*)
" The secret was reveal'd to thee by one
Whose name thou did'st engage not to divulge "—
And sacred from my seeking shall it rest.

Child of my livelong love! bone of her bone
Who bare thine infant body—and to death
At thine all-innocent birth a victim fell,
That thou might'st live and—curse me?—
No, no!—yet kill! What! and thy father too?

(*The door of the cell opens, and one enters muffled in a cloak*)

Cer. So soon?

Figure. Art thou prepared?

Cer. What man can say
He is so? Yet as who hath weighed full well
The chances, ere he threw the die, I am!
See! thou shalt follow as I lead, and mark
The path unto the scaffold hath for me
No thorns.

(*He advances towards the door*)

Fig. Yet, stay! Hast thou no thought on earth?

Cer. Too many for remembrance—come—away!

Fig. Awhile! My voice doth summon not to death.

Cer. To me 'tis equal—whither, then?

(*The cloak falls, and Napoleon Buonaparte stands forth*)

Buon. To life—
And liberty!

Cer. To liberty? No, no!
That hast thou sentenced to that doom which I
Had made thy fate ere now.

Buon. Ceracchi,
No more! go free; thy crime I do forgive.

Cer. Forgiveness at thy hands I'll never seek.

Buon. Unsought I proffer it.

Cer. I'll none of it!

Buon. Rash criminal! what can'st thou gain by this?

Cer. Nothing: and therefore is it that I am
To thee incomprehensible.—Remember,
Thou can'st not kill the spirit in this clay!

Buon. To tame that demon came I hither:—listen!
Suspicion hath not in thy case, dark man!
Wronged him against whose name her bat-like wing
Hath stumbled.—Thou art worse—in truth, thou art,
Much worse than thy worst enemy can feign thee.
Enough—thou would'st my life: In that black scowl
The features of the murderer I beheld!
Beheld, yet spake not: for I fear'd ye not;
'Gainst that was proof.—

Cer. Thou wast?—say rather had'st!
Thy proof thou wear'st, not bear'st about thee.

Buon. How!

Cer. Thy corslet is no secret, Corsican!
Though by your sudden start, till now you thought so.
Pray you proceed.

Buon. Incomprehensible! I knew
The madd'ning blood-thirst in thy look; and mark'd
The spirit of the cannibal jet forth

From every joint of thee—thy fever yearn
Upon my warm life as I walk'd before thee!
I quail'd not; for I deem'd thee sole—I erred.
My spies informed me ye were many banded:
My life was on more dagger's points than one:
The ravings of a madman passed me by:
The empty toad-croak fell not on mine ear:
But, when conspiracy dogged at my heels,
And the assassin's weapon wore no sheath,
E'en from his child's unprying eyes—'twas over!
The guilt of longer dalliance had been mine,
Ye were arrested, prisoned—what remains
But for the headsman to perform the rest?
Hold—I will spare thee all confession—

(*Buonaparte unlocks his fetters*)

Go!

And with offended honour make thy peace!

(*a pause—Ceracchi stands immoveable*)

Buon. You linger!—And is life so little worth?

(*Ceracchi still remains fixed*)

The doors are wide.—The guards withdrawn.—No eye e'en
To scan thy gait, or make thee feel its gaze.
One waits without, for whom each moment drags
The length of days by weariest hope drawn out—
Thy daughter.—

Cer. Without a pledge—a promise from my lips,
An oath, a compact to no more thirst after,
The drink my soul doth pant for, Liberty—
Which cannot be but through thy death?—
Buon. Without!
Go forth!—Once past the threshold, thou art changed.
Cer. How little hast thou read the upright soul!
Buon. Thine will I trust. Thou'rt free!
Cer. And my companions?— [hear
Buon. Death—death without reprieve!—listen! may'st
The muffled bell above our heads, each minute
Tolling as for the dead!
Cer. And think'st thou thus
To cozen my poor conscience? fie! fie! fie!
So to misapprehend my nature—so
To fancy me the thing thou'd'st have me be.
Think'st thou for death I had not set my thews
Ere I encompassed thy life? or think'st thou
For envy, 'gainst thy state I did conspire,
With the uncharitable rival's hate?
Was mine the dull and treach'rous eye that blinked
Askance upon thy greatness, in sick pallour?
Did it not rather, high as Ætna-flame,
Blaze out at the bleared vent, and loud proclaim
To thine unwilling soul the fire within,

Which could not quenched be, but in the change
Of thy tyrannic temper, or thy blood?
And yet, for all, my spirit thou'd'st coward deem!
Most capable her conscience to condemn,
And, by thy proffer'd pardon deep enthral'd,
Barter her best of pearls for loathed life—
Life, without liberty!—Thou know'st me not.

Buon. Madman! is this thy lasting purpose?

Cer. Ay:
As destiny itself immutable! [like

Buon. True—true. I should have known was nothing
Mock martyrdom to grace a murderer's grave.

Cer. (*abstractedly*,)
I had a hope was something more than hope:
For it was plumed with an up-struggling wing,
And wore to my entranced faculty
A most undying aspect—coming ever
With a new grace each morning of my days—
That, ere I died, the last completing touch
Might by this hand upon th' unfinished bust *
By Buonarotti's happiest touch inspired

* Michel Angelo Buonarotti commenced a bust of Brutus at Florence, which he never finished. The topic at the time called forth the epigrammatic wit of the verse-makers, in allusion to the motive which might have influenced the Artist to leave imperfect so fine a work.

Into the perfect semblance of the man
Who slew the Roman Tyrant, on the Ides,
The ever-memorable Ides of March,
Be consummated—and the world behold
How such as Brutus can look forth like gods!

Buon. Go now, fulfil thy wish.

Cer. That can I not.
To make the marble live, the fashioner
Must of that life participate, whereof
He would impart the image to the clay.
Not as the Brutus' is my right arm red
With the ripe blood of tyranny.—

Buon. No more!
The senseless banter of a maniac moves me
To nought but pity and contempt—Ceracchi,
My word is pledg'd for thy escape.

Cer. I know it,—
Unto my daughter?

Buon. Do thou seize the moment:
More than this once I may not make it thine,
Thy life by other means is 'yond my reach.

Cer. Thou hast fulfill'd thy promise—we are quits!

Buon. Thou wilt not?

Cer. Never!

Buon. Think!

(*Ceracchi waves his hand in negation*)

Buon. Then, madman, die!

(*As he pronounces the last words, Leonora rushes in, and throws herself into her father's arms. The officers of justice appear in the back-ground; and the scene closes on all.*

PASSAGES

TRANSLATED FROM THE

FAUST

OF

GOETHE.

NIGHT.

(In a high arched narrow gothic chamber, Faust is sitting disquieted at his desk.)

Faust. At length with restless energy have I
Law, Physic, and alas! Divinity
Throughout explored—and here I sit, poor fool!
As wise as ere I went to school.
Magister hight, hight Doctor too! and flout
My pupils by the nose about
Through ten years, round, and up, and down,
To see there's nothing can be known!
'Tis that consumes me heart and bone!
For sooth a cleverer man am I
Than all your scribbling, doctoring, preaching fry.
Me scares no doubt, nor pang of conscience evil,
Nor fear of Hell, nor terror of the devil,
And therefore 'tis my soul no joy approves.
No fancy beckons me, no impulse moves

To enterprise, or thought, that should befit
To teach mankind some glorious benefit.
Without estate, no rank is mine,
Nor worldly gear, nor title fine :
No dog would thus lap up life's bitter cup—
Wherefore to magic I have given me up,
The dread experiment to try
If Spirits' might and augury
Avail the secret door to burst :
That I no more, with sweat accurst,
Need talk what I dont understand—
Oh ! rather might my intellect expand,
Deep in the bowels of the earth behold !
Watch Nature's teeming womb unfold !
Nor longer deal, like mocking birds,
In the mere chandler-ware of words !

Oh ! would it were, thou full orbed moon !—
For whom at the dead nights' mid noon
At this lone desk so oft have I
So steadfast watched, and wearily,
What time athwart th' illumin'd ream
Thou shed'st thy melancholy beam,—
Thy last, last look, oh ! would it were
Upon my present torment here !
Oh ! that on some mountain height
I could, all revelling in thy light,
Round mountain caves with Spirits evermore
In balmy meads of twilight hovering soar !
No longer forced in knowledge fumes to mew
Bathe freshened in thy vivifying dew !

Woe's me! still in the dungeon pent,
Accursed, stifling 'prisonment!
Where Heaven's loved ray itself grows dim
Through murk-stained mullions struggling in.
Hemmed round by heaps of books up-piled,
Moth-eaten, mouldering, dust-defiled,—
A smoke-bleared paper reaching to the walls,—
Phials and cases at due intervals
Disposed, 'mid instruments uncouth,
And heir loom lumber from ancestral halls—
This is your *world!*—This call a *world*, forsooth!

And ask ye, still, why in its nest
The fearful fluttering heart doth cower?
And wherefore o'er the throbbing breast
Stalks forth some undefined power
Thy leaping life-blood to restrain?—
Instead of that which God infused
Into man's soul, and heart, and brain,
Of living Nature—thou art used
To what surrounds thee—moulder, smoak, and newts:
And pore o'er dead mens' bones, and skeletons of brutes!

Awake! Away! Out, far and wide!
Say, is not this mysterious book,
By Nostradamus' hand supplied,
Sufficient guide through every nook?—
Therein may'st find the planets' course:
Mark Nature teaching Man, her brother;
While mounts the soul's up-welling source
As talks one spirit to another.

In vain thy poring dull and dry,
Expounds to thee each holy sign—
Ye Spirits! hovering anigh,
Make answer with your voice divine.

(*He opens the Book at the sign of the Macrocosm*)

Aha! what rapture thrills me at the sight!
Through nerve and vein I feel the hallowed flowing
Of life-joys, fresh and filled with gladsome light!
Was it a God who traced these symbols glowing?
Which still the tumult raging night and day,
Pour in upon my heart a stream from Heaven,
And with mysterious mightiness display
The gracious powers by bounteous Nature given?
Am I a God? all seems so clear!
I see in these fair forms before me
Nature busy as the day she bore me.
Now first the wise man's meaning doth appear,
The world of Spirits is not closed for ever!
Thine intellect, thine heart are gone;
Up, Neophyte! and in the purple River
Of mornings' bloom unmelt thine heart of stone!

(*He gazes on the Sign.*)

How all into the vast Whole weaves!
Each in the other moves and breathes!
Ascend, descend the Heavenly Band,
As they the golden ewers hand:
With their pinions bliss-exhaling,

Up from earth to Heaven sailing,
Harmonious all, "*The All*" pervading!
A sight, indeed! yet ah! but a mere sight!
Where can I clutch thee, Nature infinite?
Ye Breasts, where are ye? Life-springs void of bane,
At which the universe depends,
Whereto the blighted bosom tends!
Ye gush, ye give to drink—shall I thus pant in vain?

(*He turns over the leaves impatiently, and the sign of the Earth Spirit arrests his eye.*)

How differently this sign affects my sense!
Thou, Spirit of the Earth! art near akin:
I feel my energies grow more intense,
And tingle as with wine fresh from the bin!
I feel as on the world I could forth go,
The earthly bliss to bear, the earthly woe—
Where storm and strife's fierce hurly-burlys blow,
And in the shipwreck's crash no trepidation know!
The clouds are gathering o'er me!
Her light the Moon is hiding!
The lamp-wick flickers!
Fumes rise! around my head
Dart ruddy flashes!—from the roof
Down settling, Shuddering seizes me!—
It is! I feel! Thou comest, Spirit evoked!
Disclose thyself!
Ha! How my heart it tears!
And new sensation
Whirls the whole sense in its creation!

I feel my heart all up to thee surrendered—
Thou must! thou must! though Life itself be tendered!

(He grasps the Book, and mysteriously pronounces the Sign of the Spirit. A reddish flame dances about. The Spirit appears in the flame.)

SPIRIT.

Who calls me?

FAUST. *(averting his countenance)*
Spectre horrible!

SPIRIT.

By might hast thou compelled me here,
Hast long been sucking at my sphere,
And now—

FAUST.

I loathe thy presence fell!

SPIRIT.

Imploringly thou suest to behold me,
To hear my voice, to look upon each feature—
Loud smites the wail of the soul-yearning creature—
Here am I!—What! and hath thy courage sold thee?
What ague fit of drivling tremor now
Hath seized on thee, thou Superhuman, thou?
Where is the Soul's high nerve, the bosom where,
Which all within itself a world did bear,
Created, nourished, and with ecstacy,
Swelled out to mount to where we Spirits be?

Where art thou, FAUST, whose call fell on mine ear
That all so eagerly would'st have me near?
Art thou the man, who blasted by my breath
Dost through thine inmost soul-depths quake to death,
A timid path-betrodden worm?—

FAUST.

Thou thing of flame! succomb to thee?
'Tis I—'Tis Faust, thine equal! see!

SPIRIT.

In the floods of life, in action's storm,
Up and down I bubble:
To and fro
I ebb and flow—
Cradle and grave,
An endless wave,
A life of chequered joy and trouble.
About the loom of Time I never rest,
I weave the Deity's unfading vest!

FAUST.

Thou busy Spirit, that round the world dost wing,
How close I feel me to thy nature cling!

SPIRIT.

Thy kinship lies mid those thou comprehendest.
Thou'rt none of mine. (*Vanishes*)

FAUST (*gathering himself up.*)

Not thine?

Whose then?
I, image of the Godhead,
And not mate for thee?

(*A knocking*)

Oh death! I know it—That's my Famulus:
My happy fortune's over for to-day.
That all this feast of glorious Visions, thus,
The sneaking, drivling dolt should scare away!

(*Enter* WAGNER *in his dressing-gown and night-cap, a lamp in his hand.* FAUST *turns angrily.*)

WAGNER.

Your pardon, but I heard your voice recite
A Grecian Tragedy, if I am right?
I fain would make some progress in this art,
For now-a-days 'tis deemed a useful part:
In fact, I've heard it said, with some concern,
A Parson much might from a Player learn.

FAUST.

Yes, when your Parson likewise Actor plays;
As like enough may happen now-a-days.

WAGNER.

Ah! if within-doors one's so used to mope,
And scarce on holidays peeps out ones head
To view the world, as through a telescope—
How by persuasion can the herd be led!

FAUST,

Seeking will never feeling compensate;
If from the soul it do not gush,
And with primeval energy, elate,
Tho hearts of all serenely hush.
For ever ye may ponder and compare,
Hash messes from another man's carouse,
And of your own wee ashen-heap, (O rare!)
The tinder, by a breath to sparks arouse:
Of babes and apes the wonderment may'st be,
If such your palate—but soul linked to soul,
Dream not thereof in thy stupidity,
Unless the tide from thine own bosom roll.

WAGNER.

Delivery crowns the Orator's success.
I feel it well, yet can't at all progress.

FAUST.

Go seek some honest calling, then;
And be no more the mere bell-wether fool:
Plain sense and reason offer men;
No mountebank to mart them from a stool.
Whene'er the impulse to speak out is strong,
What need of striving after stale sing-song?
Sooth! all your spouts and speechifyings fine,
In which you mock so miserably your race,
Are unrefreshiug as the night wind's whine
That rattles the dry leaves in autumn's face.

WAGNER.

Eh, Lord! How long is Art!

And life how brief and brittle!
I often feel my head and heart a little
Misgive me in my critics' arduous part.
How very difficult the means to get
Whereby a man the fountain head may reach!
And ere one's over half the journey yet,
Poor Devil! perhaps upon the road his carcase lies to bleach!

FAUST.

From sheepskin, then, is holy water drained,
From whence a draught the thirst for ever stills?
Invigoration hast thou ne'er obtained
Until thy soul is slaked at her own rills!

WAGNER.

Your pardon—'Tis a great delight to feel
Transfused into the spirit of the past:
Observe how thought *her* able men, and deal
In speculations on *our* victories vast.

FAUST.

Truly, as vast as are the stars that glisten!—
My friend, times past are as a book seven sealed:
What you the spirit of the age would christen
Is in reality your own revealed,
In which the times are mirrored—what
A lamentable thing is often that!
The first glance is enough to scare away!
A dust hole and a lumber closet!
Or e'en, at best, a dramatised state play,
For saws pragmatical the sure deposit,

Such as the Puppets splutter in their day.

WAGNER.

But, then, the world—man's heart and brain—
All men of these would fain some knowledge gain.

FAUST.

Ay, what the world call knowledge—yet
There's none can name the child by its true epithet!
The few that have thereof a smattering learned
And to the mob preached what they've felt and seen,
These have been alway crucified and burned—
Excuse me, Friend, the night is growing late,
And, by your leave, we now will separate.

WAGNER.

For many an hour I fain had kept awake,
A willing listener to your learned talk:
Yet since to-morrow morning's sun will break
On Easter-day, permit some queries as we walk.
With zeal I mean on study's path to go;
Know much, yet all that's to be known would know.

(*Exit.*)

FAUST. (*Solus.*)

That any hope should in the brain abide,
Which ever to each rotten stuff will cling,
With rav'nous clutch for treasure groping wide,
And all elate to find some tadpole thing!—

And dared such mortal speech as his presume
Here in this Spirit element to sound?
Yet soothly did thy step dispel the gloom,
Thou simplest of the sons of earth around!
'Twas thou who from despair didst set me free,
Which even then my sense was maddening fast—
For ah! the vision seemed so huge to me,
I felt as dwarf before a giant vast.

I, image of the Godhead, that so near
Did deem myself unto the mirror truth,
Revelling in heaven's lustrous atmosphere
And stripped of all the properties of earth—
I, more than cherub, whose unfettered will
E'en thro' the veins of nature to explore,
And in the God-life to enjoy my fill,
Presumptuous, dared—am barred atonement's door!
One thunder-word hath swept all trace of me.

I dare not to compare myself with thee.
And had I e'en possessed the power to incline
Still, firm to hold thee here, no power was mine.
In that blessed happy moment I
At once so lowly felt and high;
Inexorably ye thrust me off
On human life's tumultuous surf—
Who'll teach me? what am I to shun?
Shall I each impulse heed, or none?
Alas! our actions, like our sorrows, choke
The path of life with weeds, and mire, and smoke!

The noblest work that e'er the mind inspired
With added newness more and more augments :
Whene'er the *good* of this world we've acquired,
We designate the *better*, trick, nonsense.
The glowing feelings which have given us life
Freeze up amid the earthly strife.

If phantasy at first with venturous flight,
Hope-buoyed, into eternity expand,
Sufficeth soon of space a little mite,
When all her hopes lie wrecked upon the strand,
Or down Time's whirlpool sucked out sight of land !

All in the deep recesses of the heart
Care makes his lair, implants his rankling dart :
And, restless, rocks about, supplanting peace and joy,
In a new mask appearing constantly—
At one time as a house, retinue, wife—
Now fire, flood, tempest, poison, or the knife.
Our courage doth before each bugbear quail,
And what we never lose we without ceasing wail.

Deep, deep I feel no part of me's divine !
The worm that traileth in the dust am I !
A reptile thing, on which no sun can shine,
All crushed and covered o'er by the chance passer-by.
Is not that dust which on a hundred shelves
These towering walls within their sides compress ?
The trumpery of a thousand toys that delves
The moth-pit, whence in vain I seek egress ?
In this place shall I 'light on what I lack ?

In thousand books read o'er the ten-told theme,
How every where itself mankind doth rack?
How here and there one happy one has been?

Thou, hollow scull! what mean'st thou by that grin?
But that thy brain, like mine, once lost its way?
Seeking with joyousness the truth to win,—
In bitter darkness pining for sweet day?
Ye, too, ye instruments, forsooth! must mock,
With wheels, cogs, arcs, and such machinery:
I reached the door which ye were to unlock—
Your beards are grizzled, yet the bolts defy
Nature, mysterious, in the light of day!
Permits no hand to tear her vale away:
And what she may not to thine heart reveal
Ye'll never wrench, by lever, screw, or reel.
Thou antique furniture, by me unused,
Art here because ye stood my Fathers' stead.
And thou, old scroll, by nightly smoke suffused,
Which the lone lamp upon this desk hath spread—
Better my little were all spent and gone
Than sit and sweat beneath that little's weight;—
Whate'er thy sires have left thee make thine own;—
Acquirement must possessing compensate;—
Things useless form the chiefest misery,
And what the moment needs it can alone supply.

Yet wherefore fasten on yon spot your sight?
Is yonder Flask a loadstone to the look?
And whence this sudden gleam of lovely light,

As when, all underneath the murk midnight,
The moon, up-peering, pearls the forest nook?

I greet thee, precious phial! Thou sole store!
In thee all intellect and art adore.
The deepest reverence thy touch inspires,
Thou type of sweetest slumber-juice—
Of deadly essences and subtle fires
Spirit sublimed!

Come down, thou costly cruise!
To me, thy Lord, no favour thou'lt refuse!
On thee I gaze—The strife grows powerless:
The Soul's bright flood away is gently ebbing—
Th' unfathomable sea outstretched, lies beckoning—
Its glassy waters chide my lingering stay—
To unknown climes invites the newborn day.—
A car of flame midway on fleecy wing
Hitherward lowers, the light wind winnowing.
Already do I feel the impulse strong
Thro' unknown realms to soar enrapt along—
'Mid spheres of spotless new activity.
And thou—worm that thou art, can this then be
Thy portion—thine the God-like augury?
Ay! go now, resolutely turn
Thy back on Earth's all-kindly sun:
Presumptuous dare to burst the brazen gate
Before whose portal all in trembling wait:
Up! now's the hour for deeds to demonstrate
How mortal worth immortal might can brave,
How tortured fancy quails not 'fore that grate

At which the herd are phrenzied, and where rave
Around its jaws the hot flames of all Hell—
Now prove Death hath no terrors fit to quell
Thy thirst for nothingness' lethean well!

Now from the cobwebs of thy long repose
I reach thee down, dispeller of my woes!
Come, ancient Bowl! whose clear crystalline face
Shines bright as yore within thine antique case:
For thee I've sighed, yet sought not, many a year.
Thro' vistas dim of many a lonely tear,
Filled with the festal hours of home and youth,
I've thought of thee, old whetstone of high mirth!
How joyously from lip to lip
Ye passed, and cheered at every sip!
The storied urn with chasings rich—
The legends by the jovials each
In rhyme recounted as they laughed and quaffed,
The generous liquor draining at a draught—
Youth, hope, love, happiness, festivity,
Come trooping up the while I gaze on thee!
To no companion *now* I hand thee o'er—
Thy legends prompt my sparkling wit no more—
The amber juice now darkling in thy brim
With drunkenness divine the sight can dim!
This drink selected, this prepared have I,
The last! The draft of deep solemnity!
Here's to *The Morrow!* pledge it manfully!

(*He lifts the Bowl to his mouth.*)

(Peal of Bells, and Chorus of Voices.)

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

Christ is arisen!
Joy to the Mortal One!
Whom the poor perishable
Grov'ling and heritable
Frailties encumbered!

FAUST.

What deep'ning burst, what choir's symphonious roll
With loadstone power repels the lifted bowl!
Already with your solemn roar ye wide,
Wide wafted bells the holy Easter-tide
Usher ye in? ye choirs! and do ye sing
The heaven-attuned song of comforting,
Whilome all in the lone sepulchral night,
By angels faltered from their lips of light,
Assurance sweet of pledge new proffering?

CHORUS OF WOMEN.

With spices we bathed him,
His Faithful, we swathed him:
In raiments of snow
We laid him all low:
Ah! and we found him
No longer below!

FAUST.

What seek ye mighty music mild
Of Heaven, with me laid low in dust?

Oh peal where ye can penetrate—The child
Of unbelief your message may not trust!
The fondest-born of Faith is Mystery!
Not to that placid sphere may I up-tower
In venturous flight, e'en while enwrapt I hear
The music of my boyhood's happiest hour,
Calling me back again to life—For me,
Yes! once, there breathed the kiss of heavenly love,
O'er the calm Sabbath stealing as a dove.
Its pealing chime had mysteries for me;
And prayer was inmost heartfelt ecstacy!
Yearning most sweet, and strangely haunting fears,
Impelled me forth to wander wood and wold:
And, in the utterance of countless tears,
I felt the germ of a new world unfold—
Th' unbounded gladness of life's salient springs.
With infant clutch around me Memory clings:
Her tiny force stays back my purpose vain.
Peal on, peal on celestial melting strain!
The tears flow fast—Earth hath her own again.

SCENE.—*Faust's Study.*

FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Cheer up, then ! leave philosophy,
And straight into the world with me.
I tell you the mere speculative fellow
Is like a brute, that some mad Sprite doth tether
Down on an arid heath—whilst, close around,
The unctuous herbage bursts the virgin ground.

FAUST.

But how commence ?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

This moment hence !
What martyrdom is this of thine !
A precious weary way one's life to pine !
Your boys make over to the churl next door :
Nor plague yourself with threshing of a straw
The best you know, you do not dare

To teach the younkers—

On the stair,

I hear one coming now!

FAUST.

I can not see him!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Indeed the poor child has had long to wait—
He must not be dismissed disconsolate.
Come, help me on your cap and gown—
A capital disguise yourself must own.

(He puts on the Dress.)

Now trust the issue to my ready wit,
Barely a quarter hour will roast the spit.
Meanwhile prepare you for our *pleasaunt fytte.*

(Exit Faust.)

MEPHISTOPHELES.

(In Faust's long garments.)

For you!—both reason, knowledge, but despise,—
Man's loftiest, noblest, highest faculties,—
And, strengthened by the Spirit of delusion
In the belief of magical illusion—
I have you, then, conditionless.
On him hath Fate a noble mind bestowed,
Which ever unrestrained would onward press:
Whose energies, o'ertaxed, for ever goad

Beyond the Earth's enjoyments. Him
Thro' Life's wild path I'll urge along,—
With its each vague unmeaning whim :—
And he shall pause amid the throng,
And in amaze stick fast—his greed
On meats that whet, not fill, shall feed :
And sue in vain for succour in his need—
That, were he not unto the Devil given,
Still to perdition must have headlong driven !

(*A Student enters.*)

STUDENT.

Newly arrived you see me here ;
A most devout petitioner,
To know and hear the man of sense
Whom all regard with reverence.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Tut ! lay the compliment in store—
You see a man, like many more.
Have you looked elsewhere round you—?

STUDENT.

Nay !
Compassionate my wants, I pray !
I come with courage keen and good :
Not flush of money, but all fresh of blood.
My mother scarce would let me part—
But I am fain to learn at the best mart.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Then here's the very place—

STUDENT.

'Dont know,—
Somehow,—I would already go.—
The walls, the halls, can no how like—
The space is narrow as a dike—
No green to look on—not a tree—
On seats in chambers aye to be,
Sight, hearing, thinking, cease for me!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Habit is every thing—the child no zest
Exhibits for the mother's asking breast.
Yet soon the urchin shews his appetite,
And even so will you increased delight
Each day at Wisdom's fount imbibe.

STUDENT.

About her neck with joy I'd ever cling,
But how that lofty eminence to win?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Say first, ere further pro and con,
What study you would fix upon?

STUDENT.

My wish were to be deeply learned,
And for the kind of knowledge burned,
Which treats of things in Heaven and Earth,

Of Science' course, and Nature's birth.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Ye' re all upon the right tack there,
But of bewilderment beware !

STUDENT.

I'm heart and soul in this—and yet
On summer holidays to get
A little nice diverting leisure,
Would be, in sooth, a real pleasure.—

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Use well your time—rapid's its flight—
Tho' method is one means to multiply it.
On this account, my dearest friend,
The logic of the schools I'd recommend,
In this the mind shews well apparrelled :
In Spanish leather pinched and barrelled,
With gait and tread more circumspect
To walk reflexion's road erect,
And shun the shilly-shambling awkward,
That will-o-the-wisps it back and forward.
Then many a day will be consumed
In teaching what was once assumed
As easy as one's meals to achieve ;
But now, by logic's alchemy,
Without *first*, *second*, *third*, can't be.
For with the mind's stuff, verily, 'tis
As with the tapester's masterpiece,

Where one thread moves a thousand ties,
Now here, now there the shuttle flies—
Invisibly the web flows on,
A thousand loop-holes linked by one.
Then comes One to philosophize,
To peep and prove the hows and whys:
The first was *so*; the second *so*:
Therefore the third and fourth you know:
And, failing first and second both,
In vain you'll seek the third and fourth!
The schoolmen prize this universally,
Yet never were known to make good tapestry!
Whoso the Living studies and describes,
The living Spirit from the form first drives;
Beneath his ken imagines all laid bare,—
But ah! th' informing Soul is wanting there!
The chemists call't *encheiresin naturae*,
And set themselves in laughing stocks demurely!

STUDENT.

I don't precisely comprehend—

MEPHISTOPHELES.

You'll find that matter easy in the end;
When you have learned how to reduce,
And classify for ready use.

STUDENT.

All this confuses with such racking pain,
As I'd a mill wheel whirling in my brain.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

To Metaphysicks next your care
Must be directed in particular.
Look well ye're deeply versed by it
In what's beyond the human wit.
A sounding phrase will stand you in good stead,
For all which is, or is not, in the head.
And for this half year, 'specially,
Observe strict regularity.
Five lectures every day, at least:
And as the clock strikes in at feast.
Be well prepared before you go:
The paragraph read through and through:
That ye may better note at home
Nothing's been said but what's set down.
Be busy writing down whatever's stated,
As if the Holy Spirit itself dictated.

STUDENT.

You will not need to tell me that again;
Its great advantages are very plain.
For when a thing in black and white is safely written down,
The pocket can most comfortably carry for the crown.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

But choose a Faculty—

STUDENT.

All things before,
I do abominate the Law.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I cannot think you much to blame in this.
I know precisely where the thing's amiss.
Both Law and Laws, like family diseases,
Increase as their posterity increases.
Shifting eternally from race to race,
And stealing, like a taint, from place to place.
Reason's made nonsense, charity a curse!
Woe's thee! for all thine ancestors the worse!
The law that's born with us—of that alas!
The question is considered merest farce.

STUDENT.

Your words my reverence have but multiplied:
Oh happy he who takes you for his guide!
Almost, I'd wish Divinity to study—?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I would not set your senses in a flurry.—
As touching this—it is so very hard
Along the course to keep ones' proper guard.
So much inveterate poison lies within;
Hardly distinguished from the medicine,
The best rule is to hear but only one.
And take your tenets from this lexicon,—
As general precept, hold fast by the text.
You make the passage thus secure, unvext,
And reach the pillared fane of certainty.

STUDENT.

Yet must there, sure, to words some meaning be?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Quite right! tho' if you drive it, you're undone.
For just as ones' ideas are getting thin,
In nick of time a friendly word steps in.
With words a glorious argument's begun:
By words a system's logically spun:
Words furnish Faiths with their particular quota:
From words subtract you can not one iota!—

STUDENT.

You're pardon, I'm detaining you with questions:
Yet once again vouchsafe a few suggestions.
Would you indulge your humble servant in
A pregnant word or two on Medicine?—
Three years, is little space for rapid stride,
God knows! and then the field's so wide!
Could one but find a finger-post at need!
You'd feel the distance dwindle as you read!

MEPHISTOPHELES. (*aside*)

I'm weary of the dry pedantic tone—
Once more again into the Devil grown!

(*Aloud*)

The spirit of Med'cines' easily explained.
Into the universe you pry, with gaze intense,—
To let it go to pieces in the end,
As pleases Providence!
In vain you have your meetings scientific:

Each man's experience is not more prolific
Than his capacity—give me the man
Who grasps the moment in his span!—
Ye seem of tolerable build, nor will
Lack courage though ye have not skill:
And if yourself will on yourself rely,
Others, be sure, will trust implicitly.
Especial, learn the way the women hold:
Their everlasting *Ohs* and *Ahs*,
So thousand fold,
Are curable as common scars,
All from one point—You'll have them under thumb
So you the half devotional but come!
A knighthood you'll require to make them see
Your own arts' vast superiority.
A dozen trick-tracks you may then solicit,
Which others knock for, centuries at the wicket.
Practise the gentle pressure of the pulse;
And pass, with languid looks and dulce,
Your arms about their slender waist
To feel if they're too tightly laced—

STUDENT. [and wh
Now that looks something like—besides, one sees the how

MEPHISTOPHELES.
Good friend, life's green and grey is theory:

STUDENT.
I vow to you I feel as in a dream!

Might I presume some other time upon
Your wisdom— not too troublesome to seem?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Whatever I can promise shall be done.

STUDENT.

Unwillingly I make my parting bow—
Might I intrude my Album ere I go?—
This little mark of favor grant, I pray.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Well, well!

(*He writes and returns the book*)

STUDENT. (*reads*)

Eritis "sicut Deus, scientes bonum et malum."

(*Closes the book reverentially, and takes his departure*)

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Obey the old Law, and my Grandam the Snake.—
Soon or late, your God-likeness will cause you to quake!

FAUST (*enters*)

Whither away now?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Where you please. We'll towards
The lesser first, the great world afterwards.

With what delight, and profit some,
You'll run through the curriculum!

FAUST.

But how with my long beard shall I
Enact my part successfully?
Th' attempt must fail—indeed I never
As worlds' adept was reckoned clever.
I feel myself with each observance harrassed—
Where others are, so little and embarrassed.—

MEPHISTOPHELES.

My friend, all that's a secondary thought;
So soon as you feel confidence within there,
At once the art of living you have caught.

FAUST.

How then shall we depart from hence? and where
Your horses, carriages, and equipage?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

An outspread mantle will afford the stage
On which we'll journey thro' the air—
But mind! no heavy baggage you'll require
In this our little trip.—A breath of fire
From out my pocket-lucifers will lift
Our bodies from this Earth.—As swift
As light we mount the buoyant atmosphere!
Once for all, welcome, on your new career!

A Small neat Chamber.

MARGARET,

(Braiding and binding up her hair)

I would give something now to learn
Who was the Gentleman this morn?—
Such boldness with such gallantry contended—
Of some high family h'll be descended,
That's certain!—on his brow 'tis writ—
Else were he not so forward, by good bit.
(Exit)

MEPHISTOPHELES, FAUST.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Come in, but softly!—come along!

FAUST *(after a pause)*

Beseech you, leave me here alone.

MEPHISTOPHELES (*looking around*)
Few Girls so tidy, I must own.
(*Exit*)

FAUST (*gazing rapturously*)
Welcome sweet twilight shades that throng
These hallowed precints! occupy my soul
Ye sweetest pangs of love, that on the dew
Of hope live languishing!—How all about
Breathes the full feeling of deep quietude,
Of order and contentment!—In this scant,
What fullness!—In this cell what scope for bliss!

(*He throws himself into a leathern arm-chair by the bed*)

Receive me, thou, whose open arms have ta'en
In joy and grief the generations gone!
Ah! oft, how oft! round this ancestral throne
Have hung the prattling troop! and even here
Hath she, Beloved One! with rosy lip
Bestowed the kiss of innocence upon
The grandsires feeble hand, her little heart
Elated at the Christmas gift received!
Maiden! I feel thy spirit rustling nigh—
Thy spirit of order and beneficence,
Which as a Mother, o'er thee daily broodeth,
Bids thee the covering o'er the board outspread,
And strews beneath our feet the chrystal sand.
Dear hand!—so angel like!
The Cot thro' thee becomes a paradise!

And here—

(He puts the bed-curtain aside)

What blissful tremor through my senses flows!
Would I might linger here the hours away!
Here Nature fashioned in her gossamer dreams
The inborn Angel-form! Here lay the child
Its infant bosom fed with lifes' warm streams!
And here, in hallowed masonry up-piled,
The God-like image beatific smiled!
And thou—what hath impelled thee here?
Moved deep I feel throughout my every pore!
What wouldst thou here? what weighs thine heart so near?
Poor Faust I cannot recognize thee more!
What magic mist enshrouds me in this place?
The longing sense would not an instant tarry—
And now—Loves' dream dissolves my soul apace!
Are we but straws blown as the wind doth vary?
And were she e'en to step this moment in,
What pennance wouldst not proffer for the sin!
The mighty Boaster, then alas! how small!
All at her feet dumb foundered down would fall!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Make haste! I see her coming from below!

FAUST.

Hence thou! away! I leave this spot no more!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

This casket holds within a trifling store—
Elsewhere I got it—put it where 'twill shew
Within the closet, and I promise you
She'll go right daft. The nicknacks for another
I did inclose; but sure the wide world over
Youth's youth, and toys, though toys, are ever new.

FAUST.

I know not—shall I?—

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Can you ask?
Or perhaps you'd put the treasure in your pocket?
In that case I advise your lust you mask,—
Spare me, save daylight ere it burn the socket.
I trust you are not covetous?—I stand
Scratching and rubbing—head as well as hand.

(*He places the casket in the closet, and closes it*)

Now off! away!
And bend to your sway
The pretty sweet popinjay.
And yet you stand staring
As for lecture preparing,
With physic, metaphysic, bodily
Within your philosophic eye—
Now off!

(*Exeunt*)

MARGARET (*with a lamp*)
It is so close, so sultry here about—
And yet it is not half so hot without!

(*She opens the Casement*)

I feel I scarce know how to tell:—
Would Mother were come home, and well!
All o'er I tremble!—yet I own
A silly timid girl I'm grown.

(*She sings as she undresses*)

THE KING OF THULE.

There was a King in Thule,
Right constant to the grave:
To whom a goblet golden
His dying Mistress gave.

Was nought he prized so dearly;
Each feast he drained it dry;
And often as he drank thereout,
The tears came plenteously.

And when his days were numbering
He counted out his thrift;
Gave all unto his own right heir,
All—save the goblet-gift.

Then, gathering all his nobles,
He bade the wassail be:
Within the Hall ancestral—
The Donjon by the sea.

Up stood that aged Toper
And drained the bowls' bright blood;
Then hurled the hallowed goblet
Down in the rolling flood!

He watched it diving—drinking—
Then sink beneath the roar!
His eye-lids soon were sinking—
His lips drank never more!

(*She opens the closet to put away her dress, and perceives the casket.*)

Whence did this pretty casket come?
I'm sure I shut the closet down.
'Tis strange! I wonder what's inside?
Some one, belike, has let it bide
In pledge for money Mother's lent?
And here's a key, too—must be meant
To open it,—and fastened by a string!
I've a good mind t' unlock the pretty thing!
What's this? good Heaven! only see!
In all my days I never looked to be
So blessed with such a sight! why these
Are ornaments that might with ease,

Adorn a Queen in her magnificence !
How would the chain become me ? whence
The lovely things ?—whose property ?—

(She decks herself in them and steps before the glass)

Oh! were
The earrings mine !—I do declare
One looks quite altered in them !—Sooth,
What matters loveliness and youth ?
They're all right proper in their way—
Esteemed as things of every day—
Their praises half like pity ring.—
Towards gold all tends,
On gold depends
(Poor creatures as we are) our every thing !

(*A Garden.*)

MARGARET, FAUST.

MARGARET.

Promise me, Henry!

FAUST.

What I can!

MARGARET.

Now tell me, dost thou hold by any faith?
Thou art an excellent good man,
But then, I fear, heed'st not what Scripture saith?

FAUST.

Leave that, my Child: thou feel'st to thee I'm true.
For her I love my soul and body too
I'd yield—rob no one, I, of church or creed—

MARGARET,

That is not right!—We must believe indeed.

FAUST.

Must we?

MARGARET.

Ah could I once thy bent
Incline!—Slight'st too the holy Sacrament—

FAUST.

I honor it.

MARGARET.

Yet long for't not—
To mass, confession—hast this many a day
Not been—Believest thou in God?

FAUST.

Who is there, Dearest, dares to say
I do believe in God?
Of Priest, Philosopher, may'st ask,
Their answer will but seem to cast
Derision on th' Inquirer—

MARGARET.

Thou believ'st not?

FAUST.

Misheed me not, thou Angel face;
Who dare him address,
And who confess
I believe him?
Who feel so vain

Himself to constrain
To say, I believe him not?
The All-comprehender!
The All-sustainer!
Holds and sustains he not
Thee, me, Himself?
Do not the Heavens arch them over us?
Spreads not the Earth out underneath our feet
And mount not, with their friendly aspects ever,
The eternal stars up—up?
Look I not eye in eye on thee?
And tends not every thing, heart, soul, and brain
To thee, and weaves its secresy
Eternal, visible, invisible, around thee?
Fill up thine heart, as big as 'tis, thereof,
And when in that one thought thou art beate,
Call it then as ye will—
Call't Joy, or Heart—Love—God!
I have no name for it!
Feeling is every thing!
Name is but sound and vapour!—
Mist-surrounding Heaven-glow!—

MARGARET.

That is all right fine and good,—
The Parson says the same almost,
Only in somewhat other words.

FAUST.

All hearts in every place

Under the Heavens feel its grace,
Each by its particular sign
And why not I by mine?
* * * * *

---

* Note. Faust's Deism, it should seem, does not assume the mysticism peculiar to his mind, until after he falls in love---that first impulse of his Devil-endowed youth---when it expresses itself in the above passionate specimen.

Margaret's Chamber.

MARGARET
at the spinning wheel, alone.

My heart is full:
My peace is o'er—
Never returning,
Oh! nevermore!

Where I am, not he,
Is a grave to me.
The world and all
To me is gall.

My silly brain
How it throbs again!
And every thought
Unmeaning aught!

My heart is full,
My peace is o'er—
Lost, for ever
And evermore!

For him I watch
Thro' the lattice flowers:
Upon the latch
For him look hours.

His lofty tread!
His noble mien!
His lips soft red!
His eyes bright sheen!

His discourse sweet!
Its magic flow!
His fervid clasp!
His kisses' glow!

My heart is full,
My peace is o'er.
Lost for ever
And evermore!

My bosom yearns
For him! for him!
It must,—it burns
To beat on him!

And kiss him so—
As I would kiss—
And on his kisses
Die in bliss!

Cathedral

Service—Organ—and Choir.—Margaret *amongst many persons*—Evil Spirit *behind her.*

Evil Spirit.

How different was it, Margaret,
When, as yet all innocence,
Thou trod'st this altar-step;
Murmuring thy many a canticle
From breast-held book;
Half child-diversion,
Half God-in-spirit—
Margaret!
Where rests thy head?
Within thine heart
What deed of crime?
Pray'st thou for thy mother's soul, who
To long long woe sunk silently thro' thee?
Whose blood upon thy threshold?

And underneath thine heart
Spurts it not gushing still,
And, with mysterious reality,
Thyself torments, and it ?

MARGARET.

Woe ! Woe !
Were I recollections free
Which glare around, and thro', and 'thwart,
In spite of me !

CHOIR.

Dies iræ dies illa
Solvet sæclum in favilla.

(*voluntary*)

EVIL SPIRIT.

Horror grips thee !
The last trump blows doom !
The grave vaults tremble !
And thine heart,
Raked up again
From ember quiet
To fierce flaminess,
Throbs high !

MARGARET.

Oh were I hence !
I feel as if the organs' tone

Choked up my throat!
And every chant
My heart strings melted!

CHOIR.

Judex ergo cum sedebit,
Quidquid latet adparebit,
Nil inultum remanebit.

MARGARET.

So close! So close!
The chancel pillars
Enclose me in!
The arches' span
Prisons me! Air!

EVIL SPIRIT.

Hide thee? Sin and shame
Live not hidden!
Air? light?
Woe thee!

CHOIR.

Quid sum miser tunc dicturus?
Quem patronum rogaturus?
Cum vix Justus sit securus.

EVIL SPIRIT.

The Angels in glory
Averting, turn from thee!

The white ones stretch, shuddering,
No welcome hand to thee!
Woe!

CHOIR.

Quid sum miser tunc dicturus?

MARGARET.

Neighbour, your scent-bottle!

(*She swoons.*)

SCENES

FOR

A DRAMA

OF

CHARLES THE FIRST.

SCENE.—*The* EARL STRAFFORD'S *Cabinet—Enter* ANTONIO *his Secretary, with papers and letters, which he arran on a table furnished with all materials for nightly stud He lights the lamp, and touches the repeater on the ta it strikes One.*

ANTONIO.

So late, and still he tarries at the Council!

(*Enter* STRAFFORD—*thoughtful and abstracted*)

STRAFFORD.

Now, are the letters ready?

ANTONIO.

They but wait

Yo

ANTONIO.

The packets for the north, shall they be sent
Immediately?

STRAFFORD.

Even before the others.
Few friends are ours in Scotland; and those few
So sluggish in their love, 'tis of all things
Most necessary they should be first roused.
We shall have need of all.

ANTONIO.

Hath aught new happened?

STRAFFORD.

Nought in appearance—in effect much. Thus—
Mens' thoughts have waked their passions up from sleep,
And these are monsters that can bide no rest,
'Till they have worked them weary—'Tis at hand, Sir!
What be those rolls?

ANTONIO.

Petitions.

STRAFFORD.

Those?

ANTONIO.

Petitions.

STRAFFORD. (*seats himself*)
Give me their substances.

ANTONIO. (*reads*)
The first from one
Who lent himself to Vane upon the matter
Of the abeyanced Baronny; and forged
Libels upon your Lordship 'till the fellow

STRAFFORD.
(Poor knave! He'd write me Jove for a Jacobus!)

ANTONIO.
Was prosecuted, cast and fined—and now,
For want of means to satisfy the law,
Lies rotting out his miserable carcase
In its most proper element, a gaol.
He prays you interpose your influence
To get his sentence mitigated, being
"Contrite of heart, relying much, moreover,
In your good qualities"—(and in his own
Impudence above comparison!)

STRAFFORD.
The man is poor?

ANTONIO.
The wretch is pennyless.

STRAFFORD.

Pity that poverty doth breed the world
So many rogues.—Convey this to the fellow,
(*gives money*)
And tell him he is free—to follow honesty.

ANTONIO.

My Lord! this wasp you'll suffer—?

STRAFFORD.

'Tis my will, Sir.
The others?

ANTONIO.

This the prayer of a poor devil
In solitary ward long kept—

STRAFFORD.

For what?

ANTONIO.

He spat
Upon the person of the King; was seized
With more, and sentenced by the Star Chamber
To 'prisonment within the common gaol.

STRAFFORD.

What seeks he?

ANTONIO.

Intercession—

STRAFFORD.

None for him.

'Tis an inexpiable offence. That man
Must be no better than a beast in spirit:
A stall, or stye, no matter which, for such
Were half too good a habitation—no:
Favor with me he finds not. To the rest.

ANTONIO.

This from a Lady much reduced—she begs you
Will speak the Queen about her suit—she seeks
A place of some employment for her Son,
Who'd gladly, for his mother's sustenance,
Toil daily with his hands—says he disdains not,
Altho' a Gentleman, all hardest travail.

STRAFFORD.

I cannot serve the Lady in this matter;
As she might learn from any chronicler
Who gapes in th' atmosphere of court—The Queen
In her dislike of me is so munificent.
That hatred is a term far too proverbial
To designate th' affection she doth bear me.
Is there no other means?—Is she so low
To take a charity nor deem it insult?

ANTONIO.

That were a hazardous thing.

STRAFFORD.

True: charity
Genders much obligation, and doth fetter
The independant soul in iron—yet
There is a grace in giving can extract
The poison of dependancy it brings,
And, as its honeys' price, inflicts no sting:
This with the donor lies; whose inclination,
Unfettered of constraint, or stern regard
Of paramount duty, is all capable
To shew th' ineffability of man,
And give without divesting from the gift
In its bestowment—that is charity.
To meet this Lady's present needs, convey
A service of my costliest plate to her:
But so as—

ANTONIO.

That were somewhat difficult.
I know not if your Lordship's rich to own
A common tankard even—

STRAFFORD.

How? what mean ye?

ANTONIO.

You do forget each gold and silver piece

(Such was your Lordship's order) to be found
Was melted down for the King's urgencies,
What time the Parliament refused him grants.

(*Enter a Servant in haste*)

SERVANT.

Lord Digby doth entreat an interview!
His errand, thus he bids me state, of deep
Importance. Scarce he'll wait for a reply.

STRAFFORD.

Dreamed I it thundered now? such suddenness
Of something soon as suddenly to happen,
Hangs like the sultry courier of a storm
About my temples—Yet how long he seems!—

(*Enter* LORD DIGBY)

Why do thy pale lips like a grave-gap yawn
My Lord? Imagination hath her terrors,
Humanity its fears!—The worst?—I am
Prepared—out with it, only!—

DIGBY.

Thou'rt impeached!—
And in that word condemned!

STRAFFORD. (*with dignified composure*)

Who hath done this?

STRAFFORD and DIGBY.

DIGBY.

The warfare of mankind is man: to wage it
A proper knowledge is most necessary,
Of plots, gins, snares, contrivances and foils;
These are the bucklers, breastplates, swords, helms, shields:
A war of traps and dark advantages—
A strife of unfair buffets—wily array
Of countervail, and night-attack, and stabs—
Bandit-like ambush—these th' hereditary
Contests a man is heir to—these the weapons
He doth inherit for the nonce—

STRAFFORD.

Look he to wield them!

DIGBY.

Dexterity grows with their use and practice.

STRAFFORD.

Are these thy sober thoughts?

DIGBY.

Fixed principles—
The firmer rooted since resisted most.
Truth is a light than shine *will*.

STRAFFORD.

So is fallacy
A wisp that *will* decoy—pity truth's light
Shines not where thickest murk is!

DIGBY.

Saddest, fen-fires
Will start to make his way most intricate
Whose tread is most uncertain!

STRAFFORD.

Mine is not so.

DIGBY.

Thou hast determined?

STRAFFORD.

Ay!

DIGBY.

Come! let's away then!

STRAFFORD.

Whither I go, you'll come not.

DIGBY.

Death alone—

STRAFFORD.

Shall put the love of our two lives asunder.
One word at parting, only—Digby! why
Dost mar the stately stature of thy mind,
And bend thy neck to slavery worse than bonds—
The yoke of thine opinions? fly! escape them!
I will intreat of you in your own eloquence,
Which was so feeling friendly urged on me,
Loose these infernal trammels! never yet
Did he who worshipped Cunning for his goddess,
With his own self feel satisfied—no, never
Did the smooth jaundice of his jealous face
Call up one prayer for his beatitude,
Or thrill one bosom at his woe. Believe me,
There is less victory than triumph, when
Guile over greatness is the vanquisher.
Still smiles superior her undaunted brow—
Still laughs at Fortune, for her impotence,
The lip that cries not "craven" to her scowl.
Whate'er the sneers of men, rise thou above them!
Whate'er their proffered plaudits, do thou spurn them!
Whate'er their fashions, go not with them, if
They war against thy reason:—and, 'fore all,
Buy no man's favor, not thy King's e'en, with
The price of the pure gold conscience is made of!—
And now farewell!—

SCENE.—*In the Palace at Whitehall.—Enter the* KING, *holding in his hand the Warrant for* STRAFFORD'S *Execution.—The* ARCHBISHOP *of* YORK, DR. JUXON, *the* KING'S CHAPLAIN, *and* LORDS *in attendance.*

CHARLES.

Give me the pen! quick! while my hand is firm.
Fie Sirs, ye are not zealous in this business!
Look how ye waver!—Now!—give me the pen!

YORK.

Thus have I proffered it your Majesty
These many several times. So please you, Sire,
To sign the document?

CHARLES.

Too late! Too late!
See how my hand doth tremble, and each sinew
Drags in paralysis of agony
The fingers tight together!—'Tis your fault.
See ye, the quill doth dance; it hath a soul in't!
Lips, too, that chatter strangely: Hark! my Lords,

Hear ye? it will not do a deed of murder!
Demons! what would ye tempt me to! avaunt!
I do abominate ye; hence! away!

(*He grasps Juxon by the arm*)

Tarry! there's that upon thy countenance
Looks like the shadow of a human soul,
Tho' perched upon the effigie of the Devil—
Man!—Come, let's look on thee! why, how thou quiver'st!
Or is't the trepidation of my touch
Which so communicates its electricity?—
Why then there is some sympathy in thee.
Yet look'st so humanlike withal, almost
I could denote thee Bloodsucker—come nearer!

(*The King gazes wistfully in his face*)

Methinks thou hast called up a tide, a flow
Of waters to my brain;—faint images
Of waves that once lay weltering in the mind,
And took in their recess all memory with them.
Did we not talk together of *him*, once?

JUXON.

We did, my Leige.

CHARLES.

He was my friend you know;
I his, and yet

(*A noise of voices without*)

What's that?

YORK.

A clamour
Raised by the people in the Palace Court
Assembled; justice ask they on Earl Strafford.

CHARLES.

Bloodhounds without baying their answer too
Bloodhounds within—nothing more natural!
There is an instinct men call sympathy
Doth run creation thro'.—

(*again to Juxon*)

As I was saying—

(*the noise without, repeated.*)

CHARLES.

Howl on, ye hell-dogs!—Is it ye who bellow
For execution on great Strafford's body,
Which the foul chosen from yourselves have sat
In judgment on, and doomed for his rare virtues!
Hence, rabid kennel of distempered curs!
Or, must ye human flesh for your grim fangs,

Take mine! on Strafford's gorge ye not—begone!

YORK. (*aside*)
This madlike mood if it do last will mar us.
The Queen, too, hath o'erstayed th' appointed hour!

CHARLES. (*to Juxon,*)
Tell me how shall I save him? thou hast been
A servant long; wert faithful ever; thrust not
Thyself into the pupil of mine eyes,
Nor haunted me by importunity
To do one thing for your own sole advantage.
Thou never dogg'dst me at each angle-turn,
To ape the officious Slave to me, thy Cæsar:
Therefore, and for much more, did I ne'er know
Disgust nor loathing at the mention of
Thyself besyllabled. For this it was
That I to other man did oftener talk
Than they to me, of thee—that thou wert left
So naked and unvisited of pelf:
Which now, let me confess to thee, doth teem
Such volumes for thee, to my thoughts; for thou
Should'st be, so far as self-aggrandisement
Acquits thee, a most honest man, methinks.
Tell me how I may chouse these vexed Devils
That track me with their cry of justice ever,
Saying the bond of peace 'twixt King and nation
Can be but ciphered in my Strafford's blood,
My friend's heart's blood?—

(*Enter* QUEEN HENRIETTA.)

CHARLES.

My Queen! my Henrietta!

HENRIETTA. (*placing her hand on his forehead.*)

How pale and wan is thy sad countenance,
My Charles! what is it here doth palpitate
And throb throughout the house of thine high thought!
Thy temples have been bound with aconite,
Surely, they burn so fiercely! See! thine eyes
How dim! there is a tear hangs scalding there!
What is the matter with thee Husband?

CHARLES.

Much!
Too much for poor humanity to bear—

HENRIETTA.

Now tell me what doth sit so heavy on thee?
I do deserve thy confidence for love—not?
Is it some broil between thy followers
The Cavaliers, and their arch roundhead foes?
Encounters have disgraced our streets so oft
Of late, nay e'en our palaces, our hearths,
That should not move thee. Hath the Parliament
Done any thing to anger thee anew?
Thou frown'st! It is so—is some difference
'Twixt thee and thy bad Commons? surely never
A death can be the cause of all thy grief?

CHARLES.

No more !

HENRIETTA.

I will discover it—what profit
Can'st find in this restraint upon the swayings
Of thy communicative soul, which lately
Hath been so niggard of its trusts, so barred
And bolted from its natural confidences ?
I was the sharer of them once, why now not ?
Is it so selfish, grief ? or so contemptuous,
It will not stoop to tell its sorrow ?

CHARLES.

Listen !
There were two friends of fortune high, but cast
In two contrarious moulds—the one was senior
In point of years, but weak and suckle-like,
Pining, by nature, for support ; nor ceased he
To droop 'till he did find it—in the other.
That other was a man of subtile frame :
A sov'reignty of mind fell to his lot ;
And he was noble 'yond his friend, by how
Much eaglets are than owls the nobler, yet
Sought he the first one's friendship—for he was
Ambitious as a Titan for much power—
That he might glorify his friend in him.
That friend could give much power—and he gave it.
The power he gave, himself knew its avail not :
And so he gave it for his own advantage,

And for the general good, conscious himself
Of his own natural incapacity,
Which t'others might did make seem nigh infirm,
They were so hugely disproportionate.

HENRIETTA.

It was right kingly so to act!

CHARLES.

Now, mark me!
The delegated power brought greatness with it,
For he to whom 'twas given did use it well:
And the two friends were one in fellowship,
He whence the power did spring, and he who swayed it.
Oh! theirs was friendship such as few can feel!
And not a want that was to one peculiar—
For they had grown into one mind, one being;
And not a wish but was of double growth—
For theirs was an indissoluble choice,
Of the same wants engender'd, and so nourished
Of inclination that had birth in either,
And mutual accord, whose echo lived
—'Twere difficult to tell in which it lived.—
Hold—I do wander from the history!
The delegated power brought greatness with it,
And greatness 'gender'd envy—comprehend'st thou?
And enemies were rife, all busy-active
To raze down glory and build up a thing
O'er which themselves might clamber—

HENRIETTA.

Well Charles? well?

CHARLES.

Oh Henrietta, thou art gentle, good,
Thy face is as the chaste moon's countenance
When she doth draw her silvery veil aside
And intercede her silent eloquence
In the still life of love: thine eyes can talk
Pity's serene infusion to the soul,
And melt an iron lid to sulphurous drops,
Tho' they fall inward on the stone-cold heart.
Look on these bloody Butchers! speak to them!
Teach them how mercy is a thing divine,
And deifies the man dispensing it;
Tell them he was my friend—alack! they have none!
They are ambitious-little, and ambition
Brooks not equality, that's friendship's soul.

YORK.

His majesty the King doth wrong his servants:
It is the people's cry—

HENRIETTA.

The people, Charles,
Do cry, not these, for the execution.
Believe't, the people—

CHARLES. (*thrusting her away*)

Viper!

HENRIETTA.

Out upon thee !—
Is this the meed of all my fondness, Charles ?

CHARLES.

I deemed thee angel, now I know thee fiend !

HENRIETTA.

A Queen struck for a Fav'rite ! blood of Medicis !
Where but in England could thy veins have felt
The blow, and burst not ?

CHARLES.

Henrietta, go
Into thy—

HENRIETTA.

France ! to France !

(*As she is going the King detains her*)

HENRIETTA. (*triumphingly*)

Thou tremblest !

CHARLES.

To think a wife could plead against her husband—
(*Exit Henrietta*)

CHARLES.

So they have robbed me too of her !—well, well !
She was so kind—so constant—loving—good :

The last green link that bound the man, Charles Stuart,
To the false tender fancies that beset us
Which we unwittingly call joys—we know not!
Give me the—Document!—
She was the planet
Astronomers do feign opposed to blood.
When stars do vanish must their influence cease?

(Draws a letter from his doublet)

This is his writing—and he prays me by it
Delay no longer his decease—How envious
Should that man's end be on whose latest eve
Life seems so little worth! yet he was one
Had honors shed on him, and called his King
Friend, in his better days—that helped him not,
No more that it did Buckingham! both, both
Drained of each drop of life by my regards!
This by the unkind stab, the stab of tongues.

(Frantically to those present)

Why cleave ye to me, Sirs? there is no sap here
To put forth food in fruits—the sheltering bough, e'en,
On which ambition's vulture tribe may pluck
Their plunder on, is snapped—nor leaf nor bud
Sprout on me—save to wither.—Save ye, shun me!
I am the Tree of Death—the noxious plant
Which serves the savages for executioner,

That yieldeth poison for the wild man's steel,
And smites all life within its fell horizon!
Come not anear me Sirs, I'm Death! I'm Death!
And dissolution breathes the air I breathe!
That she should turn upon me! She!
Dearest of deadly plagues, sweet nightingale,
Delusion-triller, bosom-thorned, whose love
Was cankerous love, and its caress all lethal!
How oft hath his familiar name been on
Those pouting perjurers, her lips! how sweetly
The modest comment of each grace run thro',
Approvement in each syllable, and pride!
Each word that made him eminent, wise, good,
How musical to recapitulate
As her own voice invented!
To think endurance can not dwell with goodness;
Nor charity in woman—e'en in her not!
The little love which in this heart could find
A place, thro' her was 'gendered: and I gazed
With other eyes than the fierce Misanthropes',
Mankind had made me: Mine own wrongs were set
Out of the sum in my mind's table-book:
And, borrowing a lens from her fair vision,
Things wore to my abused faculty
A robe of radiant illusion, beamier
Than ever poet, lover, maid or boy,
In phrenziest, fondest, maddest mood imagined.
Why could this cheat endure not? Henrietta?

YORK. (*aside*)
Mark how his hand is palsied !—

CHARLES.
Juxon ! tell me
When is the Earl to die ?

JUXON.
Immediately
Your majesty hath given your fiat.

CHARLES.
So hasty ?

YORK.
I will forewarn you, Sire, shallow delay
Avails not in the end.—The populace
Will have the death the law hath 'warded them,
And, justice still unsatisfied, declare
More victims than *the one* shall forth be singled.
They do despise the Earl's enamourment
Of life, say they, and will abide no more—

(*Charles hands the letter of Strafford to York, who peruses its contents*)

YORK.
I should be last to cavil at such heroism,
Were I in artifice some whit less learned.

CHARLES.

I asked not your opinion on this letter:
Sufficeth you have seen it—hold! no more!

(A pause)

And yet meseems my thoughts do cleave unto
Procrastination as a precious shrine
Where I may kneel and be at rest a moment,
As yet no bloody stain upon my soul.—
Another hour, and I must be all friendless!

(The King signs the warrant.)

(Another pause)

CHARLES.

Hath nobody a word to say to me?
Oh Henrietta! thine were murderous thoughts!

(He falls senseless into the arms of Juxon.)

SCENE.—*A Chamber in the* LORD FAIRFAX'S *House*—LORD *and* LADY FAIRFAX—*she leaning on him, as they gaze out from the window.*

LADY FAIRFAX.

Almost the dappled clouds blot out the moon,
That wrestles like an amazon with darkness—
Struggling for the mastery!

(*A pause*)

Hear ye the owls upon the abbey porch?
Harsh clappers to the bell of midnight, they!

(*Another pause*)

Tell me, how 'is't murk sorrow's craped mutes
Stand sentry at thy lip's dumb port, sweet Lord!
See how revolving thought his leaden wheels
Hath dragg'd along thy brow—with deep-digg'd rutts
Marking the track he took! Ah me! I fear

Thou hast some secret sorrow at thine heart,
Which I, thy wife, may know not: some sad grief
That is not mine to share, who am thine half—
If so, thou dost but cheat thine own dear self;
For it doth grieve me more, to know thou griev'st,
Unknowing yet the cause, than if I knew
To help thee to divide, and to sustain it.
Hearest?—yet answer'st not!—where are thy books?—
Thy pictures?—and thy bronzed cabinets,
That did delight thine hours with their rich stores,
And feed thy life with incense?—where thy lute?
I have not heard its tone this many a day:
Be the strings broken? I will get thee new ones,
So thou wilt play to me—what say'st thou, love?
Car'st not to do't?—tell me some story, then:
Some tearful tale, that suits with thine own mood.
Or if thou wilt not—so—I am content.
In short—do as ye list, so thou'rt but near me.

FAIRFAX.

Now art thou jesting, love: thou know'st full well,
More of myself is thine, than I can claim.

LADY FAIRFAX.

My share is small; but thine were small indeed.
Who hath the rest of thee?

FAIRFAX.

The Commonwealth—

LADY FAIRFAX.

And of thy thought likewise?

FAIRFAX.

Ay much of that—

LADY FAIRFAX.

Say all—she is thy wife, not I.

FAIRFAX.

Alas!

LADY FAIRFAX.

What said that sigh, my lord? come, tell me true.

FAIRFAX.

It wish'd not done, what cannot be undone.

LADY FAIRFAX.

How much was that?

FAIRFAX.

Many dark doings, born
Within the paltry space of few brief months.
O my poor country! when will end thy troubles?
Discordant Mars, with gory hilt hath been
For six dread years predominant; yet still
Insatiate for blood, bares his red blade,
Greedy alert for havoc!

LADY FAIRFAX.

Yet awhile—

FAIRFAX.

I see the torrent—hear its angry roar—
But what am I, that might but yesterday
Have stemm'd its fury ?—nought !—to morrow, what ?—
The cedar totters ! who will heed the sward ?
I saw our captive King not long ago;
He that was grace and majesty itself
Totter'd with gait infirm, and feeble step,
The grim coparceners of long confinement—
Sighing his griefs aloud. The hazel locks
Which down his shoulders swung their swart crisp curls,
Had shrivelled into lank, and matted hair,
Grief gray'd and silver-hoary ere its time;
And all his mien forlorn and miserable.
Much did he speak of his dear people still—
Theme uppermost in his unranged thoughts—
He blamed himself, he said, for all that happ'd;
And wish'd once more to see his people happy,
And ev'ry man content. This as he spake,
Big globous drops fell on his untrimm'd beard,
And hung their pure bright testimony there,
As witnesses of his sincere intent.
The sight of thing so high thus brought so low
Did fill my soul with sympathy—while he—
Firm as an oak he stood, bearing his wrongs;
Scath'd but not blasted; rended but not fell'd !

LADY FAIRFAX.

Sweet life, think not upon these ugly things.
Come, let me kiss and kill despondency;
Here shall not be her empire. Thou art mine;
And I will reign thy empress; so content thee.
Now are no joyous revels of a court
To mock at thy distemp'rature: no dames
To cram thee with Cyrnean honeycombs,
And force thee, in thy spite, to swallow down
The bitter sweet of satire; therefore I
Will talk thee into thine own ridicule,
And shew thee these crook'd-back habilliments—

Who's yon, with moody and dejected front,
Counting at every tread the marble's vein?
He should be by his port, one of thy kin,
Or rather thy antipodes, sweet Lord;
Who are true shadows of ourselves they say.
Surely that figure is beknown to me,
Look? dost thou see him, Love?

FAIRFAX.

'Tis Cromwell! hush!

LADY FAIRFAX.

Why is thy cheek so sudden pale, my Lord?
What freezes thus thy fascinated sight?
Yon snake?—heed not his antick mummeries.
Alas! I may not mingle breath with thine,
But e'en so soon do these hard-favor'd men,

Break in upon the short-liv'd intercourse
Of thy sad hours with mine—indeed, 'tis hard—
(*Exit Lady Fairfax.*)

Enter CROMWELL.

Good day, my Lord! methinks ye look but ill—

FAIRFAX.

Then am I the true mirror of thyself.

CROMWELL.

No wonder that—for in these sickly times,
What is there which the murrain pestilence
Leaves sound? It is our fault—your fault and mine—
And, were it not for certain puking qualms,
That swarm like maggots on men's good intentions,
Had never lain so long our work's reproach.

FAIRFAX.

No more! illustrious hypocrite! I ask
What thing doth prompt thee, Cromwell, thus to me
To moot the King's destruction! art thou wrong'd
More than the rest of us, that thou shouldst thus
Heap thy vendictive hate upon his head?
Flinch not, fierce man! I can look into thee:
Another sun hath risen on thy world:
Oh what a prospect do I see within thee!
Horrid hath been the journey of thy life!
Thro' seas of blood, o'er hills of human flesh;
And thou the pilot of those dreadful seas,

The guide to whom those hills were most familiar!
Oh, if thou canst, shut up thy window'd self,
Lest eyes look in, and see thy sooty soul.

CROMWELL.

Lord Fairfax, I have heard thee patiently;
And noted well thy vague unmeaning taunts—
If soul but thou—thou see'st how cool I am—
How dared ye, Fairfax to revile me so?
Me who have done thy bidding: propp'd thee up:
Been all subservient to thy purposes:
Hung at thy elbow: waited on thy beck:
Mingled a patriot's tear.—

FAIRFAX.

(A crocodile's!—)

CROMWELL.

With thine—forbear! thou canst not move me, Thomas.
Have we not wept together? pray'd together? bled?
O, rather was I not as offspring fond
Of thy fair reputation—

FAIRFAX.

To abuse it!

CROMWELL.

Oft nestling me beneath thy covert wing!
Did I e'er guide thy pen?—

FAIRFAX.

Yes, with thy tongue!

CROMWELL.

Or stain the ink of it!—

FAIRFAX.

Ay, with rank poison!

CROMWELL.

Thou liest!

FAIRFAX.

Ha!—

CROMWELL.

Thou canst not move me Fairfax—
Were not thy deeds thine own? dost thou deny it?
What! wilt thou one day use me for thy steed,
And spur my labouring sides to save thy neck;
Then on the morrow swear I gallop'd off with thee?
If thou repent'st thee of the good thou'st done,
It is the sign of a remorseless soul!
If thou neglectedst that which ought t'have been—
What's in my name that it should stand between
Thou and thy God, Lord Fairfax! charge not me
With thy delinquencies: I'll not endure it.
Praised be Heaven, I ne'er was yet the dupe
Of mine own conscience, nor the thing to melt
Beneath a woman's thimble oratory:

What hath been done let them investigate,
Whose province 'tis to take strict cognizance,
And scann the deeds of others—should I fear?
What must be done, why let it come to pass:
Justice shall have free course—she cries aloud,
And with an angry voice, for Stuart's head:
Nor by the Lord! shall she go unappeas'd.

FAIRFAX. (*to Cromwell.*)
O God of truth! look on this murderous man.
Was it with such discourse ye gain'd my heart,
And won me to the cause of liberty?
Was it with schemes of blood, base regicide,
That Fairfax's ear was won? his falchion pledg'd?
His ploughshare forged into a halbert spike?

CROMWELL.
What wouldst thou have?

FAIRFAX.
Freedom but not revenge.

CROMWELL.
Now didst thou ever dream of liberty?

FAIRFAX.
Thou sayest well; I dream'd of liberty.
Oh she has been the polestar of my course
An intense magnet to my loaded soul,
A sweet deception, a most fair untruth,

Which, tho' so false, I fain would real deem;
Putting the cheat upon myself with gladness.
Ah thou hast worm'd from me, my golden hopes;
My hopes for thee—for I did love thee once!—
For friends, for countrymen, for self, for all.
Fain I'd have giv'n (a father's legacy)
This charter to my children's children's heirs:
And in that gift made mention of thy name—
How we did tug for it; how prosper'd too;
And how themselves should keep the precious gift—

CROMWELL. (*jeeringly*)
Fairfax when thou didst dream of liberty,
How look'd she to the pupil of thine eye?
Came she i'th'gory, saffron-dipped stole
Of grim-gear'd contest? or in amice white,
Of sweet concession, with her olive wand?
How beamed her glance?

FAIRFAX.
As wide unlike to thine,
As a mild planet to a fenfire's glare!

CROMWELL.
What fool wert thou to dream of liberty!
Wed thee to love, to jealousy, to hate,
To rank despair, but not to liberty!
Indulge in hope, but not of liberty!
Cheat men with words, beguile their cred'lous ears,
But rally not the herd with that lame catch,

That tinkling weather-bell of old, yclep'd
Sweet liberty!
What fool e'er found her habitation out?
Her den, her palace, or her hermitage?
What human guest e'er grac'd her dainty board?
Swill'd of her bowl? or sipped her bucket pure?
The fowls are free, that ride the stormy wave—
The people, too, on elm tree tops that build,
Braving with battlements of twigs the heavens,
The commonwealths of crows, and cormorants,
They're free!
If thou'dst be wise, hie to the terrene poles,
Go, Orpheus like, go scour old Earth's fag ends,
And lacerate thy lungs with crying loud
Liberty! there mayst, 'mid pyramids of ice, proclaim
Thine empire sole, and dream that thou art free!

SCENE.—*A Chamber in St. James's Palace*—KING CHARLES, *habited in deep black, is seated at a table intently perusing a volume—His Children the* PRINCESS ELIZABETH *and the* DUKE *of* GLOUCESTER *on either side, their hands in his. A Halberdier in the distance leaning on his pike.*

CHARLES.

"To be, or not to be, that is the question"—
With me, no time is now to put the question.
A smile—a sigh—a jest—a sympathy—
A little talk—a little travelling—
Some shaking of the hands—more of the head—
This th' evidence?—O compound rare
Of contrarieties, ycleped life!
Contingent good, outweighed by certain ill!
What is't to lose ye? riches, profit, gain.
To let the wave of things close o'er our heads,
And sink so imperceptibly away,
That scarce a bubble notes the gap we make.
To kiss one's hand, as on a journey bound,
And bid good bye to all—one last good night,

Compose us then to Death's undaybreak'd dose—
And dream about the world we've left behind—
But to be thrust, not rock'd, into this sleep;
To have our mid-day, ope, undrowsy lids
Seal'd ere the hour of rest, shut down upon
Life's landscape, whilst the sun shines vertical;
To be enchain'd to Death, not wedded to't;
Made wanton food for his unhungered maw;
Converted to his present property,
By man so soon his perquisite—

CHILDREN.

Dear father!

CHARLES.

No, here I live! these are my miniatures—
Myself re-edified, remodell'd fair!
O life! if thou wert ever sweet, 'tis now.
How rich is he who counteth out his wealth
In pretty coins like these; whose surfaces
Stamp'd o'er and o'er with his own image, shine,
Unscratch'd by th' world's rough currency—
Who would not grow a miser o'er such heaps?—

As he regards the Children, tears trickle down his cheeks—
The Children with their handkerchiefs dry them.

CHILDREN.

Don't weep dear father!—

CHARLES.

Must I leave my babes?
O God! regard these orphans when I'm gone.

GLOUCESTER.

When you have left us, father, will you not
Come back once more to see us?

CHARLES.

Never, boy!

ELIZABETH.

Alas! will no one snatch thee from this place?

CHARLES.

Care not for me, dear love: my time hath fleeted.
Our days are number'd, and mine hour is come.

ELIZABETH.

Not one to help thee, father?

CHARLES.

What mean'st love!

ELIZABETH.

Uncle of France, can he not save thy life?

CHARLES.

Alack! sweet heart, he with the other crowns
Will never stir 'till I am dead and gone:

Then, ravenous like wolves for Charles' goods,
They will send hither to divide his spoil,
And quarrel for the mastery of his chattels—
The world is yet all strange to thee my girl.

GLOUCESTER.

This morning when they brought this dismal suit,
Methought they clad us in't, that we might die.

ELIZABETH. (*embracing his knees*)

O do not leave us father!

GLOUCESTER.

I *will* die!

CHARLES.

Elizabeth! sweet heart! dry up thy tears.
I fain would speak a charge to thee—hear'st love?

(*Giving her a ring*)

Give this remembrance to thy mother, child,
(If e'er hereafter ye may meet again)
And tell her thus: that next to Him above,
She was my stay and comfort when I died.

(*A roll of drums heard without*)

HALBERDIER.

The time is up—the princes must de, art.

CHARLES. (*takes Gloucester on his knee*)
Yet once—one little moment, and I've done!
And now they will cut off thy father's head—

GLOUCESTER.
And brother Charles's too?

CHARLES.
(Ay when they catch him,)
And make thee king, and then they'll cut off thine:
But, mark me child, thou must not be a king
Whilst yet thy brothers Charles and James do live.

GLOUCESTER.
I will be torn in pieces first; I will!—

CHARLES.
Remember that! and now remember me!

He embraces the Children repeatedly, and delivers them to the Halberdier, who leads them away sobbing bitterly. The KING, *overpowered, sinks into his seat, and covers his face with his cloak.*

MISCELLANEOUS

POEMS.

IL PESCATOR.

Hence ye listless restless crew!
To your haunt, the town, and brew
What ye will of toil and trouble
'Mid the City's froth and bubble.
Hence! nor with your tramp profane
The peaceful fishers' still domain!

On a green bank let me lie,
Fragrant with the cowslips by:
At my feet a glassy stream,
Shingling right athwart the beam
Of the noontides' golden ray,
Quickened by the curling spray,
As it spangling, sparkling, breaks
In a thousand rainbow streaks—
There with purple hook, and line
Where gossamer doth intertwine
Its filmy-textured, fleecy form
With soft silk from the throwster worm,—

Fling the pearly minnow in,
Where the great trout's rudder-fin
Sweeps the eddies in a mound,
Chasing his scaly prey around.
Or, if summer's sun be out,
And the June birds' merry note
Melodious from the tranquil sky
Fills the fields with ecstacy,
We along the winding marge
Or alder bank will roam at large,
And, light as leaves in autumn fall
At the dead year's funeral,
From needle-top the glossy fly,
Mottled o'er with many a dye,
Graceful throw successively:—
Mark the chevin as they rise
Eager for the veiled prize:
Or, with keener eye essay
The deep pool, where the live-long day
The ogre pike doth lurking lie.
Come, the fisher's life and try!
Track the footway by the side
Of the river's snaky tide,
Befringed deep with rushes high,
And reeds that evermore do sigh,
As tho' the shepherd God were lurking nigh:
And when the hot oppressive hour
Of high noon weighs upon each flower;
When every thing that lives hath dropp'd to rest,
And nature's self dreams out her sweet siest

There, in some branch-ychequered glade,
Outstretch'd all underneath the shade
Of doddered oak or hazel's lofty stem,
Bedight in lichens crisped diadem,
The sweet repast, we'll calm prepare,
And each the gladd'ning converse share:
With songs and mirth and many a laugh,
The whiles the circling juice we quaff;
And, as the stealing minutes creep,
And shadows lengthen in the vale,
(With finny spoils the turf bespangled,
The how, the where, each prey entangled)
We'll pile the rainbow-hued heap,
And tell the evervarying tale:
Until the gray fly's horn, with echo shrill,
Herald of even, o'er the western hill
The mellow air doth musically fill.

WRITTEN IN THE DUNGEON OF CHILLON.

How still! how solemn! solemn still as then,
What season paused of long captivity
The sickening clank—when freedom was made free,
And Bonnivard thrust out on life again,

A voiceless, hopeless, bondage-altered man!
Meseems I see a shadow human-like,
Gazing with wistful brow on yon red ring
Deep wedged in the grim stone. Reflexion's sting
For him no more hath venom—hers to strike
Thought but not hope upon! forlorn and wan,
The pillow's hue with his assimilates,
And seems his soul with petrifaction mates!

The vision thrilled me, and I started up!
But empty calm was all—seemed in the cave
Time's pulse at stillness audible did stop,
To choose with light and hope one common grave—
Save fragments falling piece-meal. Drop by drop
Trickled the oozings from Leman's blue wave,
And silence to the soul a mildew-sadness gave.

MOUNTAIN GOATS.

Wide straying wanderers, that on Idris' top,
Or Snowdon's twinborn peak the scant herb crop—
Or range the mossy mantle, dew-besprent,
Of Skiddaw, or Plinlymmon's battlement,
How little is bested

Your ever browsing tread
By sweet vicissitude of season sent!
Rough bearded people! whether ye whilom,
When Maro died, did roam
From rural Arcady your ancient home—
Or, with far erring feet,
From Hebron, pristine seat,
Guided by many a patriarchal crook,
Your venerable race hencefar betook,
Tradition tells not—long long ages syne
Of the Trinacrian muse extinct the line,
And shepherd-kings and kingdoms all are gone.
Ye on the dwindling apex of a cone
Point perched, I've shuddering marked:
O'er pine-brow'd alps uptoiling often heark'd
Your tinkling monologue to th' idle hind,
Piping his Lydian measure in the wind,
On warbling flute
Of elder shoot—
Alternate concord, sweet and well defined—
Long on his staff the listening Traveller leans:
The music melts him, all his manhood weans,
And in the dew-drop of a wanderer's tear
Oozes the honied pang of many a memory dear.

LETHE.

The brook glid fast, the brook glid slow,
In a drowsy lulling dream:
So lullingly the brook did go
That you might fancy in its flow
An invitation in.
And alders by the brook did grow
Half out half in the stream.

The Nymph upon the bank she stood,
Toying with the licorous flood:
One foot on the margent trippeth;
One foot in the waters dippeth;
(So the swarthy swift that sippeth
As skims she, her wings to lave.)
Standeth she, those trees like to,
The alders on the bank that grew
Half in half out the wave.

The bats did flit, the owls did hoot,
For it was eventime:

The water rats athwart did shoot,
And wild fowl gambolled to boot
The stream from lime to lime.
All all is still, by heath, by hill,
The curfew clapper save that curleth
The ear around in thrilling sound—
How many more such notes profound?
The curfew clapper sure now burlieth
More than is her wont!—all's still!

The brook glid fast, the brook glid slow,
In a drowsy lulling dream:
So lullingly the brook did go
That you might fancy in its flow
An invitation in—
The Nymph upon the bank she stood,
Coying with the licorous flood—
Hastily her bosom heaveth,
Like the ripple that receiveth
The load of her loveliness!
The Nymph is in the stream—sweet creature!
Plunging playfully, each feature
Glows than doth each wave no less.

The bat doth scream, the owl doth hoot!
Ply to and fro, the rat and coot!
The curfew ceased hath to swing!
The quarter chimes bemuffled ring!
The Nymph is in the stream—God save her!
Plunging fearfully—o'erwave her

The troubled alder trees and beech—
So near and yet so out of reach!
The dismal sun looks luridly,
Twice-sized, and sultry roan:
Now must the sun, assuredly,
Amain be hastening home;
Yet why hath he, with vapory veil,
So mystically shone?

The Nymph is in the stream—God take her!
Floating breathless—who shall wake her
From her saintly death-sleep dream?
Down, and further down the stream,
She is floating, floating found.
The hymn of wail, upspiring, wound
Her spirit round:
Yes, Death did take her!

HEROD AND MARIAMNE,

A DRAMATIC SKETCH.

Herod the Great, last King of Jerusalem, on his departure from the City to meet Anthony at Laodicea, gave in charge to Joseph that if Anthony should kill him (Herod) Joseph should immediately cause to be murdered Mariamne, Herod's beautiful Queen, pretending that as he had a tender affection for his wife he was afraid of the injury offered him, if, after his death, she for her beauty should be engaged to some other man.

Josephus.

Herod and Mariamne.

Herod.

By the light along thy brow,
By the gloss upon thy tresses,
By each unaccomplished vow
That the load of life oppresses
When mortality transgresses,
Promise, dearest!

MARIAMNE.

By the body thou dost bear,
By the soul that's caverned there,
By the torments of despair,
Thou art nearest!

HEROD.

Should the foeman take my life,
Should the dungeon vault immure me,
Wilt thou be another's wife?
Could another's love allure ye?
Cans't thou too of this assure me,
Dearest? dearest?

MARIAMNE.

Though the turtle cease to build,
Though the sun forget to gild,
Yet shall never be fulfilled
That thou fearest.

HEROD and JOSEPH.

HEROD.

Take, I charge thee, take this dagger:
Swear thee, if I die, to stab her—
Slave! dost dare my purpose stagger?
Swear it! Swear!

Joseph.

Mighty Herod! life is lovely;
Beauty lovelier—let it move thee
Once to lift thy soul above thee—
How she's fair!

Herod.

Traitor! limbless will I tear thee!

Joseph.

Spare, great Herod! spare, oh spare me!

Herod.

Promise! or my slaves shall bear ye
Lifeless away!

Joseph.

Give me, fearful man! the dagger.

Herod.

See ye stumble not nor stagger!

Joseph.

I will promise—

Herod.

Swear!

Joseph.

To stab her
On thy death day.

MARIAMNE and JOSEPH. Afterwards HEROD.

MARIAMNE.

Pour me poison to the brim—
Life, that was all love for him
Breast to breast, nor limb to limb
Shall longer steal!

JOSEPH.

Soft ye, soothe ye, beauteous dame,
Truest love is never tame;
Herod's passion's not the same
That triflers feel.

MARIAMNE.

Herod gave thee charge to kill me—
See this bosom—

JOSEPH. (*aside*)

Still thee, still thee,
Fluttering heart! Ah!—

Mariamne.

Here may'st fill thee:
Strike it, strike!

Joseph.

Dead he is not, Mariamne;
Home returning, he will hand ye
To the throne where loves will fan ye
Bridal-like.

Mariamne.

Was not mine to be his fate?
Love no longer now—but hate!
Joy of vengeance, joy elate!
Come soothe my breast!

Herod (*rushing in*)

Mariamne!

Mariamne.

Herod! dearest!

Herod.

Thou, and thou alone, art nearest!
In this bosom all thou fearest
Set at rest!

THE TRIUMPH OF TERPSICHORE.

The King did fret, the King did fume,
And not a noble dar'd presume
In his eyesight stand—in his presence be—
So stirred up was he!

Nights and mornings nine there went
By o'er the castle's battlement:
Cloudy mornings ten save one
Have risen since his gloom begun.
Brow bewrinkled, beard uncombed.
He sitteth in gloom all gloomily;
His hounds, 'twixt whom and him to be
One humour seemed where'er they roamed,
Their master's mood partook, and foamed
All at the mouth right rabidly;
Listless round about they lay;
All gloomily in gloom lolled they.

Now what can make the monarch so?
There's not a single soul doth know.

Yet every lawful means they try
His spell to break—

First, minstrelsy.
The monarch hears, but heedeth not
Now what can be his ail? God wot!

'Gins the monarch's brow to lower!
Storm of music down to shower
Ceaseth suddenly!
And now the solemn song is raised;
Now the Hero's prowess praised;
His feats loud sung, his conquests rung,
His mercy millioned by each tongue;
But, no, no, no, decreaseth
The gradual quire;
The monarch's ire
Observed was to boil the higher,
Himself the theme—that ceaseth.

Now what can make the monarch so,
Not a single soul doth know.
Yet every lawful means they try
His spell to break—

And, bright as day
Ere minute-mouldered, Dowsabel—
She who knew to soothe him well—
Timid came. She loved the King:
And feared him as an awful thing—
She was, he said, ay holier far

Than were one half the saints in the calendar.
But now to see her frowned the king;
To look upon such lovely thing
Not now he choosed;
But she was crafty, was the fair,
And precious of her debonair,
And seldom in it used.
She knelt, she spake—he heard, not listened:
Ceased she suddenly, then glistened
In her eye a future tear,
Eave-hung, trembling, pearled it there—
Eloquent it shewed all o'er,
Like the soul of some long'balmed orator
Come back to move pity on earth once more.
Yet for all that tear could tell
Heedeth not the monarch's ee—
Still gloomily in gloom sits he.

Now what can make the monarch so?
Dowsabel doth she not know
The means to make her power avail?
Ay, Dowsabel, thou knowest well
The means to make thy power avail.

Lo! refulgent 'fore the throng,
Dowsabel with lute and gong;
Round her brow the wreathlet curling—
Wreathlet fresh of blending rods
Gathered green from ivy tods—
On her taper fingers twirling

Lifted high, the tambour-drum,
Gingle-circled, thumped with thumb ;
Fast and fleet and faltering never,
Round and round she spins, and halts.
Deftly to her foot's endeavour
Waves her ivied wand so clever,
'Till subsides, unseen to sever,
Her step into th' aerial waltz.
Floats she in ether, now easterly, westerly,
Skims the smooth surface, now this way now that:
Pictures the progress of day, and of yesterday,
On rolling, on toiling, curved now, now flat.
Faint thee not, faint thee not, Dowsabel, Dowsabel!
Lo the great Monarch looks over thee now!
Dowsabel, Dowsabel, dance thee well, dance thee well!
Clouds are departing the great Monarch's brow.

So trips it merry Dowsabel
With her quivering feet so well.
See the twin-born spheres of ocean
On her white neck white waves telling;
Mimicking the sea's commotion,
Surge on surge on surge quick welling!
See her slender satined feet
Making music every beat!
Dancing ever, right and left,
Gliding, sliding, nimble paced,
Leaping languid, half bereft
By motion of her robes displaced—
Working, weaving, through and through,

Swinging, swaying, smoothly, who
Could look on her and love not too?
The Monarch's brow from wrinkles free
With her mouse eye spieth she;
And deftly from his lap she strook
The beads, and relic-box, and book—
The Hall with shouts resounded!
The wily Monk, confounded,
Drew o'er his brow the cowls' dark shade,—
The King uprose, and from his waist,
Thick with glittering jewels graced,
A studded girdle gave the maid—
Sweet Dowsabel, who knew so well
The means to make her power avail—
And never more the King was known
To parley with the monk alone.

THE SLAVER

The whirlwind is roaring;
The Heavens are warring
With Earth:
The vessels asunder
Crack, splinter, sink under
The surf.

The rent sails are fluttering;
The white spray upsputtering
Mast high.
The sea vulture's screamings
Drown th' overboard seamens'
Last cry.

Now dying, now nearing,
The thunder's careering
Strikes dumb
One gallant ship shivers,
Her gunflash delivers
Sound none

"See! the monsters who man us,
"To the tempest their canvass
Have spread!
"Tis the hour for remembrance,
"Sons! let not your vengeance
Lie dead!"

Thus the Chief—as he uttered,
The black captives muttered.
"Avenge!"
Their chains were soon o'er them,
Their fiends lo before them—
"Revenge!"

Ah! who shall make mention
Of God's dread prevention
That day?
There was carnage and slaughter
'Till red rolled the water
Away.

"We are free! we are free!
"But on what shore shall we
Find home!"
"On the white Isles of Ocean!"
Shouted throats in commotion,
"Come, come!"

LOVE AS LANDSCAPE PAINTER.

(FROM GOETHE)

On a peak at early morn reclining,
Stedfastly I watched the gray mist falling,
Like the folds of a transparent curtain,
Shrouding all things in a moonlight dimness.

Said a Boy, who sudden stood beside me,
How cans't sit, good Friend, so long and ponder,
Musing vacant on an empty vapour?
Hast thou lost all pleasure now for painting?
Sculpture, too, hath she no sweet allurements?

At the child I stared, and said within me,
Surely will the Urchin play magister?

Wilt thou ever be thus dull and lazy,
Said the boy, can nothing rouse thy stupor?
Come, now, I will sketch a little picture—
Picture that shall wake thy idle pencil.

Then, his ruby red forefinger lifting,
Radiant as the bloom of damask roses,
Tracing faint lines on the outspread carpet,
'Gan to draw a richly varied landscape.

High aloft he drew a sun's bright circle,
Dazzling to the sight with beaming splendour:
On each cloud was tinged a golden border—
Clouds thro' which the molten sunbeams darted.
Next appeared the graceful waving summits
Of refreshing trees that robed the mountains,
Rising gradual in a wide perspective.
Nor beneath was glassy water wanting:
For anon he drew a winding river,
Circumambient, and so like to nature,
In the sunbeams it appeared to glisten,
And I fancied I could hear it murmur
As it flow'd along its sloping margin.
Flowers blossomed on the white wave's surface,
Glowing tints, too, the green meadows checquered,
Gold and purple with enamel blending,
Emerald green and flaming bright carbuncle;
Last of all behold the purple Heavens
'Gainst the hills their pearly arc expanding!
So harmoniously their hues contrasted,
At the spectacle I swelled with rapture,
Now the Artist, now the work admiring.

Have I then, said he, at length succeeded?
Art convinced I understand the mystery?

Look again! now comes the master-movement.
Then he lifted cautiously his finger,
Where the ground the sun's bright rays reflected,
Lo! the form of a most lovely maiden!
Beautiful her mien, and rich her vesture;
Auburn ringlets floated round her temples,
And her cheeks were of the same bright colour,
With the hand by which they were depicted.

Oh thou boy! exclaimed I, what great master
Hath endowed thy pencil with his magic?
Thou, whose touches breathe divine-like nature,
Into canvass quickened life infusing?
Scarce I said, when lo! all gently fanning,
Rose a breeze that stirred the mountain summits,
Into waves each river-ripple curling:
Filled the garments of the maiden lovely,
And—what scared my wonder-stricken senses—
She herself, that woman-fair creation,
Rose to come, and in a moment stood she
'Twixt the urchin artist and his scholar!

Now was all commotion, all bestirment—
Rivers, flowers, trees, the veiled vestment—
And the slender feet of her all lively—
Think ye on my rock I lay fast rooted,
Like a rock immoveable remaining?

NEMESIS.

A robin sat on a bramble bush,
Discoursing to the last of light:
Lord! how his little throat did push
Forth stanzas with a giant's might!
A nest of tiny things hard by,
To him upon the bush did cry
In sweet beseechful melody.
Two beings were—two cherub things—
Scarce summers six with fleecy wings
Had breezed their buxom cheeks. The one
A scarf upon her neck had on.
Forth both had strolled to see the sun
Set flush along the horizon—well!
What evil chance them twain befell?
Listen, I to you will tell
If evil chance them twain befell.

Fair fruit groweth on the tree;
The children, with their hands so free,
Pluck and pluck—now grammercy

Poor Robin's young, for thee, for thee!
The Robin ceased hath? no; hush!
Hear him from the bramble bush,
Twittering still his twilight trill—
Mournful, yet melodious fill!
With high delight
The Children laugh outright!
And, eagerly elate,
Search, discover, plunder straight!
A cloud goes overthwart the moon!
The Robin now hath ceased his tune;
He'll wake with sorrow on the morrow,
And change his gurgling note full soon.

The Children grew to man's estate;
And mixed with the world, and ate
Bread of joy; and, grateful, owned
Life was pleasant, life was fair;
For wedlock came, and love was there,
And offsprings with their parents features—
A family of loving creatures!

They lived upon an Island small
Girt round about with poplars tall;
A life of happiness—not long.
O misery! O woe in store!
Once arose a fearful squall—
There put in Pirates, fierce and strong—
These stole the infants one and all—
They never were seen more.

Such evil chance, as I you tell,
The young ones of those twain befell:
And to this day 'tis unconfest
If drew the plundered Robin's nest
That visitation horrible!

A Yew-tree rooteth on yon lonely mound,
Of antique mould, and awe-impressing growth;
No herbage greens the mossless trunk around,
Nor clinging tendril plights its wedded troth.
In unrepose, the sombre branches rest;
So dark the gloom their shadow trails along,
That e'en the Raven, last of birds unblest,
Ne'er croaks amid the boughs his boding song—
The work of centuries, alone it stands!
Its gnarled trunk scored by the fairy bands
That drop at nightfall from far lunar lands—
A knotted trunk! close twisted like a brood
Of adder-young, as round their dam they rise,
Coiling in contest for the stricken food
By her held vertical—dead poison lies
Hid in the treacherous cups of honied juice
Which those murk branches temptingly put forth,
Yclad in vermeil garb of coral glues.
Ah! pluck not, Clamberer! 'tis thy young life's worth!
Tree of unlifelike stillness! solemn plant
Of sad significance! whose wild arms flung—

Fit emblem of contortion!—far aslant
Hell gates' declivity (so Naso sung)
Distilled o'er wandering Ghosts the deadly sleep—
Lo here thine earthly attributes! to keep
Unjoyous cheer at Death's drear festival,
And sojourn in his citadel of graves.
Whene'er yon Tree doth spread its gloomy pall
Athwart mine eve-tide way—like storm-tinged waves,
Dark as its dismal hues the sick soul grows:
So mournfully it sways its boughs in each faint gust that blow.

A word that signifies
What its sound denies—
A look that expresses
The prettinesses
Of thoughts it would mask,
(And how hard that task!)
When the heart pants for fear,
And Hope's sickly tear
Hangs dimming the sight,
In the noon of the night,
When two bosoms tremble
To think they dissemble
What either doth feel,
Yet fears to express it,
'Till both learn to guess it,
And lisp it, and bless it—
What disproves
These are Loves'?

"DATE OBOLUM BELISARIO!"

Loud. long, and listless howled the ev'ning wind,
For it was Winter—thoughtful men did keep
Lone twilight's interval, revolving deep
High themes of speculation for the mind,
In silent solitude,
Reflection's chosen mood —
And calm was all, and quiet in its kind!

When sudden drawled an unlink'd melody
Of creaking, piercing tones, along the night;
Now fast—now slow—now loud—how halting quite
Before expressed—joined now, with hideous cry,
Like mattock'd worms, together,
Twisting erewhile they tether,
"Curse on thy calling, Psalmist!" mutter'd I.

Zounds! is a Piper's soul so constitute,
That hateful noise makes music to his ear?
Or limping utterance preferable to hear?
Hath he so subjugate his senses to't?
Again uplifts the screech;
Divided each from each,
In see saw, yawning stops, like bray of long-ear'd brute!

Out on thee, knave! thou mak'st my bowels yearn!
I shall go mad—thank Heaven, 'tis over now!
Once more, all's still—thou'rt tired out, I trow,
Minstrel perverse, that canst rejection spurn!
Still there?—I thought thee gone—
Tell me, thou lyric drone,
Are minstrels only won
To bear unbent the load of iron unconcern?

Hard is thy chance! yet art thou obstinate,
Killing the hours by piecemeal as thou dost;
Tho', may be, thou'rt inured to know the worst
In hardship's calendar;—made desolate
By man's rough usages?
And in revenge it is,
Thou early doggs't his quiet, haunt'st him late.

Perhaps thou'rt meagre ?—famished ?—then why not
Seek other travail ?—'tis afforded thee
From fellow man to sue for charity;
Thou'dst rather wrench thy dole, than beg a jot—
Old man ! 'tis well in thee;
Thy independency
A nobler boon deserves, than is thy lot !

Methinks his music grows more musical !—
Fetch me my cap and mantle !—quick !—apace !—
So—I must see him—sure a minstrel's face
Can tell a wand'ring tale historical !—
Lo ! in the road he stands,
Turning with oft changed hands
A sun-warp'd case of pipes mechanical !—

See how the cold snow, drifting heedless down,
Grows o'er him as a garment—yet he shakes
From his brown unstitched brim, the lodging flakes,
And empties with one hand the hollow crown,
Nor ceases once his tune,
But turns and turns aboone,
Of cold or wet regardless, taunt or frown.

One foot i'th' drain, one on the curb doth rest,
And up and down, on this side, then on that,
At windows casts his eyne, where idlers sat,
But, noting him, had fled as from a pest,
Tho' that was hours ago,
Still there he stands below;
Urging sans asking the Minstrel's meek behest.

Mark well his lineaments!—see how they speak!
His kindred far—his clime a foreign land—
Where—not as here—man's heart doth prompt his hand,
Where music holds eternal passion-week—
Music, the Minstrel's ware—
Music, the Southern's care—
Alas! why leave his country?—shouldst thou seek?

The aged man hath watch'd me—will he go?
Scared by the scann of chill indifference,
When ic'd neglect could not amove him hence?
Ay—he hath slung his organ—no—yes—no—
Yes, he hath said his say—
Taken his homeless way—
Take this, old man!—no thanks! —'t'will house thee from the snow.

FROM GOETHE.

DEVOTION.

Thou fadest, and art so friendly:
Consumest, and sing'st so sweet.

POET.

Fell love hath dealt with me dreadly,
And, I will confess it meet,
I sing with a heart sore laden;
Seest thou the tapers fading?
They shine as for ever they fleet.

I will not beg what thou proffers't not;
I will not take what thou offer'st not;
And should thine eye still still deny
The love mine looks for, even I
Will feign thee fond exceedingly.

There's that in thy nature cherisheth:
For its lack mine own fast perisheth:
As echo to sound, as footfalls on ground,
As green reeds to the river bank's margent round—
Such need for affection's found.

SONNETS.

I.

To a Redbreast, singing on an icicle.

How, ruddy-nippled Robin, canst thou sit,
Trilling forlorn amid the aguish jaws
Of jellied winter tide? is it because
Thy feet are colder than the chill of it?
Hath Summer's soft uncharity so killed
All thy soul sensitive, that even thou,
Perforce, art dead to persecution now?
Hard, grievous doom! and pitlessly fulfilled!
How oft partakes our circumstance of thine,
Wee filmy-footed thing! like thee we pine
In callous mood this world's inclemency,
And wail our big woes in thy dolorous key—
Man, feeling Man, 'numbed in neglect's hard mould,
Walks barefoot o'er Life's ice, nor feels the surface cold!

II.

To the Memory of Blake, the Artist.

Mighty Magician! mightier than, I wis,
Great Uther's prophet-peer! no Merlin thou,
To whom signs unsubstantial all did bow.
Eye had not seen, mind made, such mysteries
As veined thy mood and fashion. Shadows hurled
From some deep dreamy sphere, their plumes upfurled,
Slow flitting, hovered o'er thy fine filmed sight.
Creator of a World within a World!
Where dim mysteriousness, obscurely bright,
O'er all cowers brooding—what thy power, and whence,
To sift thy soul so fine, and mentalize
Whate'er in thee was clayey? how dispense
Such magic distillation? and make rise—
Thy wand a chalk—such awful Mummeries?

III.

After the Spanish.

Stood a tear in loved Ianthes' eyelid:
Chrystal bright the gathering moisture glistened:
Fond I dwelt upon the drop, and listened
Long the rising sigh—till grief beguiled
Dumb love's dowry,—I could look no more.
Spread anon a misty sea before me:
Thick it threw its briny breakers o'er me,
Down my chill cheek trickling salt and sore.
Sudden, sweet, and sadly sobbing sighs fell
From the Maiden as she stood beside me,
With her mute lips meaning more than words tell—
'Twas a pangful moment did divide me
From thy lip's last breathing, loved Ianthe!—
Lips that were thy soul's sanctuary!

IV.

WRITTEN AT KUSNACHT.

"TELL met him in the road, a little below Brunnen, and in an instant an arrow laid him dead at his feet."

Naylor's Helvetia.

If it be Murder to avenge a Life,
Or crime to slay the slayer; to restore
The tide of soul thro' Freedom's languid pore
By plucking off the Vampire: or with knife
To the heart to stab a Tyrant in his might,
And in one offering hecatombs combine—
Whole hecatombs that at oppression's shrine
Had else paid sacrifice of wrong o'er right—
Then was, great Tell, that glorious guilt all thine;
Whose bolt, son-saviour once, twice true could steer,
To twang atonement o'er a Gesler's bier.
The very air, incorporate of thee,
Teems with glad impulses of Liberty.

V.

April Sun in College.

What life is there in light! not quickened more
By sweet return of Spring, the Winter's gloom;
Nor glen where day-beams come at, to resume
Their seasonable reign, than is the floor
Of this my "pensive citadel," tricked o'er
With the first foot-marks of the courier Sun,
Revivified. For tho' to me belong
The antique chamber with its gothic door,
And tendrilled casement, where the rose may run
His wild love 'bout the vine, and vesper song
Burst forth of trilling redbreast on mine ear,
What would they all without thee, Sunbeam dear?
In which the peopling gnats, 'till slopes far night,
May revel blithe—such life is there in light!

VI.

THE STONE-CHAT.

A little Bird there is, with small shrill note,
Frequent on heaths and barren uplands gray;
Which, as the traveller wends him on his way,
Anticipates his path, perching by rote
Upon the roadside stones: and many a day,
She for his sole companion, far away
Journies the Wanderer, cheered along I wote
By the plumed partner of his pilgrimage,
Whose plainful pipe for many a weary stage,
Blast-tuned, concordant, in Eolian scream,
Lifts up a desert song—lo! like a dream,
Fleet fleeing from the sleeper's waking sight,
Wide o'er the waste she wings her fitful flight,
Returning ne'er!—farewell, sweet Eremite!

VII.

Art-Nature.

Some covert dell, thick set, and overgrown
All with the squandrous bramble, heatherbell,
And pervanche loved, that by some ancient well,
Or at the plinth of a once sculptured stone,
Emblems the loveliness of contrast—leading
No inlet, save an avenue of Elms,
Wildly across the mist of their still realms
Mazes of maddest architecture threading:
A gentle slope of lawn, left natural
For some traditionary holiness,
Still requiemed by the robin at dusk-fall,
Still audible thorough its loneliness—
Hither to wander, listening, and feel
Her step approach—*her* step unchangeable!

CONFESSION.

(FROM GOETHE)

What is to hide the hardest? Fire:
For by noon the smoak betrays:
By night, the flame, the terrifier!
Moreover, hard to hide always
Is Love, which, never so stilly fed,
Will peep 'neath the lid where he's canopied.
Yet the hardest to hide is a Poet's strain:
Ye'll stove it under a bushel in vain.
Be't fresh from the Poet's anvil hit,
Then is he full of nought but it:
Be it all neat and cleanly written,
What else but all should be with't smitten?
He *must* proclaim it, sad or sweet;
Be it a torment, be it a treat.

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